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Kořeny a současnost radikálního islamismu v západním Sahelu

The Upsurge of Radical Islamism in the Western Sahel Region

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Prohlášení:

Prohlašuji, že jsem tuto diplomovou práci vypracovala samostatně a výhradně s použitím citovaných pramenů, literatury a dalších odborných zdrojů.

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Abstrakt (česky):

V poslední době zažívá severovýchod Nigerie vzestup radikálního islamismu. Povstání vyvolané extremistickou skupinou Boko Haram přitahuje pozornost medii a politiků po celém světě. Jeho původ a motivy nejsou ale příliš pochopeny a často špatně vykládány.

Tato bakalářská práce se proto zaměřuje na fenomén nábožensky motivovaného násilí v severní Nigérii z diachronické perspektivy. Má za cíl objasnit současnou situaci a tendence poukázáním na předchozí vývoj v zemi a zkoumá návaznost mezi jednotlivými hnutími. Snaží se taky identifikovat některé opakující se črty v ideologii a motivacích významných militantních islamistických skupin, které poznačily Nigérijskou historii.

První část práce se zaměřuje na Fulbský džihád Usmana dan Fodia, po kterém následuje rozbor hnutí Izala Abubakara Gumiho, pak šíitského hnutí Ibrahima El-Zakzakyho a nakonec revolty Maitatsine ve městě Kano a okolí. Závěr práce tvoří analýza kořenů, vývoje a motivů sekty Boko Haram ve světle již popsaných extremistických náboženských hnutí.

Abstract (in English):

In recent years, Nigeria has seen an upsurge of radical Islamism in its north-east. The insurrection instigated by the violent Islamist sect, Boko Haram, received considerable media and political attention around the globe. Its origins and motives are, however, not fully understood and often misinterpreted.

This thesis therefore looks at the phenomenon of religiously motivated violence in northern Nigeria from a diachronic perspective. It endeavours to shed some light on the current situation and tendencies by pointing out how they are linked to previous development and how they draw upon former movements. It also attempts to identify some recurring patterns in the ideology and motivations of respective violent Islamist groups that have marked Nigerian history.

In the first section of the thesis, the Fulani jihad of the Shehu Usman dan Fodio is addressed, followed by an overview of the Izala movement of Abubakar Gumi, the Shiite movement of Ibrahim El-Zakzaky, and the Maitatsine revolts in Kano and its surroundings. The thesis concludes with an analysis of the origins, development, and motives of Boko Haram, in the light of previously discussed violent religious movements.

Obsah

Introduction

Religiously motivated violence is a recurring phenomenon in the western Sahel region but in recent decades there has been an apparent upsurge of violent Islamist[1] movements in the region. Such development has been increasingly drawing the attention of scholars as well as the public, especially as allegations surfaced of local radical Islamist groups pledging allegiance to international terrorist networks.

In spite of growing academic and media attention, however, reliable information on radical Islamist groups currently operating in the western Sahel is scarce. For this reason, I have decided to look at the phenomenon of religiously motivated violence in the region from a diachronic perspective. I will try to shed some light on the current situation and tendencies by pointing out how they are linked to previous development and how they draw upon former movements. I will also attempt to identify some recurring patterns in respective violent Islamist movements in the region, in order to prove that they constitute some sort of a continuity.

For reasons of space, the scope and focus of this thesis is restricted to the area of approximately present-day northern Nigeria. This choice reflects the regional importance of Nigeria as the demographic and ideological centre of Western Sub-Saharan Africa, [2] as well as the huge international attention it has recently received due to prolonged instability in its north.

Islam has been present in northern Nigeria already since the 10th century. Unlike North Africa, where conversion to Islam was mainly a consequence of the Arab conquests,[3] to the south of the Sahara the spread of Islam is imputable mainly to trade. There are numerous accounts of extensive trade relations between Islamic North Africa and Sub-Saharan commercial centres. Groups most involved in trade were among the first to be converted, which can be explained by the social and economic benefits of conversion to Islam. As a religion born in the commercial society of Mecca, Islam provided an ethical and practical code to control commercial relationships among the members of different ethnic groups and guaranteed

[1] "Islamists conceive of Islam as an ideology, a total mode of life, and work for the establishment of Islamic societies and, eventually, states based on Islamic law, *sharia*." In this sense Islamist movements are reformist and puritanical, but they are also champions of the idea of *ijtihād*, the independent interpretation of the *Quran* and *Sunna*. Actually, in the Sub-Saharan African context the Islamist call for revival and return to orthodoxy and practices based on holy texts usually constitutes a break with traditional African Islam infused with unorthodox practices and governed by local customs.
Evers Rosander, Eva. "Introduction: The Islamization of 'tradition' and 'modernity'." In Evers Rosander, Eva and Westerlund, David, eds. *African Islam and Islam in Afrcia: Encounters between Sufis and Islamists*. London: Hurst and Co., 1997, 4, 6.

[2] Montclos, Marc-Antoine Pérouse de. *Boko Haram: Islamism, politics, security and the state in Nigeria*. Leiden: African Studies Centre, 2014, viii.

[3] El Fasi, M. and Hrbek, I. "Stages in the development of Islam and its dissemination in Africa." In El Fasi, M. ed. *UNESCO General History of Africa, Vol. III: Africa from the Seventh to the Eleventh Century*. UNESCO: 1988, 59-67.

security and the reliability of credit, two of the chief requirements of long-distance trade. At this point of time conversion concerned mainly urban centres of trade and political power while the peasants were only little touched by Islam. The next class to convert to Islam after the merchants was that of the rulers and courtiers. Most converts, however, continued in some of their customs and traditional rites, resulting in the creation of a syncretic form of Islam.[4] This development was probably facilitated by the long distance between western Sub-Saharan Africa and the heart of Islam – the Arab peninsula and the great cities of Islamic learning in the Middle East. Generations of religious reformers were strongly opposed to such impure forms of Islam and attacked them repeatedly over the centuries – sometimes in non-violent, while at other times in violent ways. After numerous purification attempts over the course of the centuries African traditional religions or at least some of their features still persevere.[5]

The above mentioned quest for a pure version of Islam is one of the major patterns that are discernible in virtually all Islamist movements – violent or non-violent – and it can be identified among the motivations of Islamist groups up to our days. Apart from the vision of purified religion, factors such as personal charisma, political and socio-economic motivation, ethnic ties, and the education system all seem to be significant in shaping Islamist groups in the area of northern Nigeria.

This thesis focuses principally on those reformist Islamist groups in the area of northern Nigeria which at some point of their existence used violence to achieve their pre-set objectives. Special attention is devoted to the Shehu Usman dan Fodio and his Fulani jihad, as during his lifetime the Shehu established ideological and rhetorical patterns, as well as models of conduct and rule, that have become points of reference for numerous Islamic reformers and religious movements in the region in the centuries to come.

Following an overview of the Fulani jihad of the Shehu, the Izala movement of Abubakar Gumi, the Shiite movement of Ibrahim El-Zakzaky and the Maitatsine revolts in Kano are addressed, respectively. The analysis of these groups focuses especially on their origin, ideological background, objectives, and societal base, as well as on how they are linked to each other and what similarities they show.

The most recent manifestation of radical Islamism in northern Nigeria, Boko Haram, also receives substantial attention. Unlike most research on the topic, the origins, development, and motives of Boko Haram are analysed here in the light of earlier violent religious movements

[4] El Fasi, M. and Hrbek, I. "Stages in the development of Islam and its dissemination in Africa," 68-76.
[5] According to the CIA World Factbook 50% of the population are Muslim, 40% Christian, and 10% hold indigenous beliefs.
"Africa: Nigeria." *The World Factbook*. 30 July 2015. [03.08.2015]. Available from: https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ni.html.

in the region. I attempt to find traces of continuity between Boko Haram and its predecessors, in terms of ideology, referential framework, socio-economic circumstances, organizational structure, and ambitions, in order to make the case for the locale nature and origin of many of its characteristic features. In this way I counter some of the misconceptions of Boko Haram as a group imputable to foreign influence, while not downplaying the significance of its asserted allegiance with international jihadist organisations and its inspiration by them. I outline some of the recurring themes in the discourse of addressed radical movements, such as purification, Western education, killing of fellow Muslims, or the relationship with the established government.

As for the methodology of this work, it is a diachronic analysis of religiously motivated violence in the area of approximately present-day northern Nigeria. Unlike many research areas, both primary and secondary sources are more widely available on older subject matters of the analysis than on contemporary ones. Considerable research has already been conducted on the Fulani jihad, as well as on the Izala movement. As has been already mentioned, however, access to first-hand information on Maitatsine and Boko Haram is extremely limited. Sources are often problematic and especially in the case of Boko Haram contain contradictory accounts stemming from local political interests, military propaganda, or misinterpretations by international media. While our knowledge on the Fulani jihad and the Izala movement is often based on works and accounts by the respective movements' leaders, more recent groupings are much more clandestine, less learned, and show a tendency to develop and express views to a lesser degree. Due to this lack of available information, the dynamics of Boko Haram's development, motivations, and objectives are still not fully grasped. Therefore, this thesis scrutinizes how could better overview of past violent religious movements in the area of northern Nigeria further our understanding of the current Boko Haram uprising.

Orientation among northern Nigerian place names is facilitated by maps in the appendix to this work.

1 Usman dan Fodio and the 19th-century Fulani jihad

The spread of Islam in today's Nigeria began a millennium ago, predominantly in the north but later also in the southwest.[6] For centuries, however, Islam had strong syncretic traits as a result of continuous tension between Islam and still vigorous and widely supported paganism. [7] Islam has by the 15th century become the religion and way of life of small literate elites and manuscript sources testify that it has become superficially but widely accepted among rulers of the western Sudan area. The newly accepted common religion has, however, failed to bring about security or territorial unity, while *Sharia*[8] appears to have been little more than a cover for the legalizing of arbitrary imposts.[9] Meanwhile, the mass of the people continued in their traditional polytheistic beliefs and were at first barely touched by this exotic monotheistic faith.[10] At the same time that the struggle between Islam and paganism was going on, there was a parallel tendency of transformation of tensions into a deeply rooted synthesis between the two cultures and their distinct practices and customs. The ensuing syncretism and its instruments – *ʿulamāʾ* of little education – have become the targets of criticism for centuries to come.[11]

In the second half of the 18th century, the problem of impurity of religious tenets and practices has been embraced by the Fulani religious scholar, the Shehu[12] Usman dan Fodio (1167-1233 / 1754-1817), who became the most prominent early figure of Islamic reform in the western Sudan. He waged a holy war against established authorities in Hausa city states, who systematically perpetuated the duality of local African traditions and the Islamic religion.[13] In the jihad of 1804–1808, he founded the Sokoto Caliphate **w**hich brought most of the northern part of present-day Nigeria and adjacent parts of Niger and Cameroon under a single Islamic government.[14] The Fulani jihad of Usman dan Fodio and the establishment of the Sokoto

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[6] Library of Congress – Federal Research Division. *Country Profile: Nigeria*. July 2008, 1.
[7] Hiskett, Mervyn. "An Islamic Tradition of Reform in the Western Sudan from the Sixteenth to the Eighteenth Century." *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London*, Vol. 25, No. 1/3 (1962): 578.
[8] The *Sharīʾa* is the "detailed code of conduct comprising the precepts governing modes of [Islamic] worship and standards of morals and life" of Muslims. It can be considered a whole way of life for Muslims. Islamic law is the scholarly discipline which interprets the precepts of *Sharīʾa*.
El Fasi, M. and Hrbek, I. "Stages in the development of Islam and its dissemination in Africa." In El Fasi, M. ed. *UNESCO General History of Africa, Vol. III: Africa from the Seventh to the Eleventh Century*. UNESCO: 1988, 40.
[9] Hiskett, Mervyn. "An Islamic Tradition of Reform in the Western Sudan from the Sixteenth to the Eighteenth Century," 583.
[10] Hiskett, Mervyn. "The nineteenth-century jihads in West Africa." In John E. Flint, ed. *The Cambridge History of Africa: From c. 1790 to c. 1870.* Volume 5. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008, 131.
[11] Hiskett, Mervyn. "An Islamic Tradition of Reform in the Western Sudan from the Sixteenth to the Eighteenth Century," 580.
[12] The usual indication of Usman dan Fodio in the literature, meaning *Shaykh* in Hausa.
[13] Fillitz, Thomas. "'Uthmân dan Fodio et la question du pouvoir en pays haoussa." *Revue des mondes musulmans et de la Méditerranée*, 91-94 (2000): 211-212.
[14] Library of Congress – Federal Research Division. *Country Profile: Nigeria*, 1.

Caliphate facilitated the expansion of Islam to the south and east from Hausaland and brought about social change and the consolidation of Islamic governance. The Shehu and his Caliphate have become models of Islamic governance for centuries to come. He left behind a rich and sometimes contradictory legacy, for which reason he was venerated by very diverse religious reformist movements, as will be demonstrated in upcoming sections.

1.1 The early years of Usman dan Fodio

Usman dan Fodio (his full Arabic name was ʿUthmān b. Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. Ṣāliḥ)[15] was born in 1754 in the village of Maratta, in the Hausa city-state of Gobir, to a family of *Mālikī* religious scholars.[16] He belonged to the Fulani tribe, the members of which were scattered in the whole western Sudan region. The Fulani were originally herders but from the 15th century they started to settle among Hausa cultivators and some of them became integrated in Hausa city-states.[17] Hausaland was located in the central *Bilād as-Sūdān*, bordering Kanem Borno in the east and Songhai in the west.[18] The ancestors of Usman dan Fodio settled in this area already in the 15th century.[19] They were engaged mostly in religious scholarly activities which to a large extent predetermined the Shehu's future endeavours.

It is important to note that at the time of Usman dan Fodio Islam has been known and practised in Hausa lands for more than three centuries. For this reason, the teaching of the Shehu was not in any way of an introductory nature. It aimed at purifying existing religious beliefs and practices, and not less significantly at bringing about social reform through these activities.[20]

Usman dan Fodio started to preach this pure version of Islam in 1774 in the Hausa states of Zamfara, Gobir, Katsina and Kebbi, often in the company of his brother Abdullahi dan Muhammadu. He preached the fundamentals of Sunni Islam: the unity of God, the foundation and pillars of the faith, righteousness and reward in paradise, sin and punishment. He gave minute instructions in ritual and judicial matters, such as the proper ways of ablutions, prayer and fasting, tithes and alms, oaths and marriage contracts.[21] Some of his sermons have been

[15] Hiskett, Mervyn. "The nineteenth-century jihads in West Africa," 131.
[16] Balogun, I.A.B. *The life and works of Uthman Dan Fodio: The Muslim Reformer of West Africa*. Lagos: Islamic Publications Bureau, 1981, 27.
[17] Beek, Walter E. A. van. "Purity and statecraft: the Fulani jihad and its empire." In Walter E. A. van Beek, ed. *The Quest for Purity: Dynamics of Puritan Movements*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 1988, 153.
[18] Islahi, Abdul Azim. "Shehu Uthman Dan Fodio and his economic ideas." *Islamic Economics Institute, King Abdulaziz University, Jeddah* (2008): 10. [15.03.2015]. Available from: http://mpra.ub.uni-muenchen.de/40916/.
[19] Sulaiman, Ibrahim. *A Revolution in History: The Jihad of Usman Dan Fodio*. London: Mansell, 1986, ii.
[20] Fillitz, Thomas. "'Uthmân dan Fodio et la question du pouvoir en pays haoussa." *Revue des mondes musulmans et de la Méditerranée*, 91-94 (2000): 213.
[21] Beek, Walter E. A. van. "Purity and statecraft: the Fulani jihad and its empire." In Walter E. A. van Beek, ed. *The Quest for Purity: Dynamics of Puritan Movements*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 1988, 157.

recorded by his son, Muhammadu Bello.[22] These are devoted to the subject of perfect obedience to the *Sharia* and the *Sunna* of the Prophet Muhammad, and they criticise *ʿulamāʾ* who preach an impure version of the Islamic religion and practice.[23] In his teaching, the Shehu also strongly denounced blameworthy customs alive in his time.[24]

In this initial phase of his preaching, Usman dan Fodio addressed the wide masses, while he refrained from contact with power holders, let alone criticism of them. From a theological point of view, his message was moderate, but this moderation in no way diminished his enthusiasm for reform and for denouncing *ʿulamāʾ* who were in his view misleading people from the right path of religion.[25] At the end of the 1780s, however, the scope of his ambitions started to increase. At the court of the king of the Hausa city-state of Gobir, he made a formal bid for the introduction of reform measures including the freedom of *daʿwa*[26] and preaching, and allowing people to follow him. While these requirements were of a rather spiritual nature, the ideals of Usman dan Fodio had from the very beginning also distinct social traits. Islam was for him contradictory to the exploitation of the poor and very distant from the idea of domination. In Gobir, apart from demanding the purification of Islamic beliefs and practices, he also called for the lessening of the burden of taxation – a very material request.[27]

It is necessary to mention here that while many of the Shehu's subsequent actions did bring about significant change in social conditions in former Hausa states, sources do not allow us to clearly display the Shehu as a social reformer. His declared objection to such taxes as *jangali*, the cattle tax on nomads, or other non-Islamic taxes levied by Hausa rulers at the occasion of festivals, was that they were uncanonical and thus contrary to the will of Allah, not that they were socially unjust. It is possible to argue that religious reasoning has only been a justification for the Shehu's worldly reform ambitions, but it has to be considered whether it is not too far-fetched to speak of social reform in a society and belief system which assigned great significance to the afterlife, and thus saw little point in striving for material improvements during a man's life on earth.[28] The same principle of the supremacy of religion generally holds

[22] Arnett, E.J. *The rise of the Sokoto Fulani of Sultan Muhammad Bello*. Kano: Emirate Printing Department, 1922, 24-43.
[23] Fillitz, Thomas. "'Uthmân dan Fodio et la question du pouvoir en pays haoussa," 212.
[24] Hiskett, Mervyn. "An Islamic Tradition of Reform in the Western Sudan from the Sixteenth to the Eighteenth Century," 586-589.
[25] Hiskett, Mervyn. "The nineteenth-century jihads in West Africa," 133.
[26] *Daʿwa*, or literally "call, appeal, or invitation," is an expression denoting proselytizing activity comprising of propaganda, education, and welfare action and aiming at inviting to the true Islamic faith.
El Fasi, M. and Hrbek, I. "Stages in the development of Islam and its dissemination in Africa." In El Fasi, M. ed. *UNESCO General History of Africa, Vol. III: Africa from the Seventh to the Eleventh Century*. UNESCO: 1988, 56.
Sivan, Emmanuel. "The clash within Islam." *Survival*. Vol. 45, No. 1 (2003): 27.
[27] Fillitz, Thomas. "'Uthmân dan Fodio et la question du pouvoir en pays haoussa," 213.
[28] Hiskett, Mervyn. "The nineteenth-century jihads in West Africa," 148-149.

for future religious reform movements as well, even though they, just as the Shehu, had often considerable links to the political establishment and had major social implications.

Whatever his motivation, the bid for reforms made at Gobir is a key indicator of Usman dan Fodio's transformation from a scholar into a man of politics. In the following phase of his preaching activity, he did not hesitate any more to accuse elites of being impious and of disregarding Islamic law in their governance and customs.[29] In contrast, from the 1790s he began to consider more militant action.[30] Backed by a growing community of followers, he proclaimed the principles of just governance which should replace the existing dynastic social order. In the year 1794 he became assured of his role in this endeavour, when he experienced a **vision** in which the founder of the Sufi *Qādiriyya* order, as well as the Prophet himself, appeared to him. He was presented with "the Sword of Truth, to unsheathe it against the enemies of God,"[31] as a sanction for his increasingly militant determination to promote reform, if necessary, by arms. From then on he felt to have been chosen to lead the fight against the Hausa kings and their Muslim allies, for whom Islam was only one of the pillars of power. He repeatedly called for taking up arms in Degel, the centre of his community of followers.[32]

At the time of his bid for reforms, the Shehu had jovial relations with the *Sarakuna,*[33] the rulers of Gobir.[34] He visited the court regularly, as the teacher of the future *Sarkin* of Gobir, Yunfa.[35] However, after Yunfa's accession to the throne in 1802, the relationship between the Shehu and his former pupil quickly deteriorated. The society over which he ruled being typical of mixed Islam, it became clear for Yunfa that his traditional authority still depended largely upon his role as protector of the ancestral polytheistic cult.[36] Yunfa was alarmed by the Shehu's growing influence and reformist teaching, and as the number of the Shehu's followers enlarged and his fame increased, confrontation between them became imminent. It occurred in 1804, when the Shehu refused to return some released Muslim captives to Yunfa and the *Sarkin* threatened to destroy the Shehu's community.[37] In a new vision, Usman dan Fodio received

[29] Hiskett, Mervyn. "Kitāb al-farq: A Work on the Habe Kingdoms Attributed to 'Uthmān dan fodio." *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London*, Vol. 23, No. 3 (1960): 566-569.
[30] Smith, Douglas K., Robinson David. *Sources of the African Past*. Lincoln: iUniverse, 1999, Chapter Four, Document 10.
[31] Hiskett, Mervyn. *The sword of truth: The life and times of the Shehu Usuman Dan Fodio.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1973, 66.
[32] Fillitz, Thomas. "'Uthmân dan Fodio et la question du pouvoir en pays haoussa," 215.
[33] *Sarkin*, pl. *Sarakuna*, means king or chief in Hausa
[34] Islahi, Abdul Azim. "Shehu Uthman Dan Fodio and his economic ideas," 4.
[35] Fillitz, Thomas. "'Uthmân dan Fodio et la question du pouvoir en pays haoussa," 215.
[36] Hiskett, Mervyn. "The nineteenth-century jihads in West Africa," 134-135.
[37] Waldman, Marilyn Robinson. "The Fulani Jihad: A Reassessment." *The Journal of African History*, Vol. 6, No. 3 (1965): 348.

permission to migrate with his followers to Gudu, at the borders of Gobir, which marked the beginning of the Fulani jihad of Usman dan Fodio. [38]

1.2 The jihad of Usman Dan Fodio

In fleeing from the *Dār al-ḥarb* (territory of war) represented by Gobir to Gudu, where he had supporters, the Shehu followed the classical pattern of the Prophet Muhammad's *hijra* from Mecca to Medina. As Muhammad's exile starts the Muslim calendar, the exile of the Shehu was considered as the start of the jihad, and as such of the Sokoto Caliphate.[39]

As a response to Yunfa's declaration of war on the Shehu's community, in 1804 Usman dan Fodio was elected *Amīr al-Muʾminīn* (Commander of the Faithful) by his followers. Since then this title, in its Hausa form of *Sarkin Musulmi*, has always been born by the Sultans of Sokoto. On the following day the Shehu raised his standard and declared jihad against the religious laxity of Hausa courts.[40]

Against all odds, the Fulani resisted from the beginning of the contest the shock of the much bigger and better organised army of Gobir. After years of warfare with ambivalent results, the final victory for the Shehu's Muslim community came in 1808 with the fall of Alkalawa, the capital city of Gobir, and the killing of Yunfa.[41]

Possible reasons for the military success of the Fulani are varied. The Shehu's military commanders, his brother Abdullahi and son Muhammadu Bello, managed to separate Gobir from its allies, they showed more skill and endurance in commandment than their Hausa counterparts, and above all they led a force with a sense of mission and extraordinary commitment. Under the banner of waging a jihad in the name of God, the Shehu was able, through the simple act of passing on a jihad flag, to spread the rebellion to remote areas and mobilise fighters to join his cause. The zest of Fulani fighters overwhelmed Hausa armies which were often made up of pagan groups aiming at preserving their own lives more than annihilating the enemy. The same conviction of mission held for any military campaign, even minor raids among pagans.[42]

[38] Hiskett, Mervyn. *The sword of truth: The life and times of the Shehu Usuman Dan Fodio*, 66.
[39] Beek, Walter E. A. van. "Purity and statecraft: the Fulani jihad and its empire," 159.
[40] Johnston, H. A. S. *The Fulani Empire of Sokoto.* London: Oxford University Press, 1967, 42.
[41] Fillitz, Thomas. "'Uthmân dan Fodio et la question du pouvoir en pays haoussa," 215.
[42] Beek, Walter E. A. van. "Purity and statecraft: the Fulani jihad and its empire," 161.

1.3 The ideological background of the jihad of Usman dan Fodio

The jihad fought between the years 1804 and 1808 had several distinct elements, all united by the Shehu. The major components of the jihad and of its ideology can be defined as purifying, intellectual, military**,** social, and ethnic. The purifying element was especially strong on the rhetorical level, where the jihad was portrayed as a fight against Hausa states which were the embodiment of the conception of duality of local African traditions and the Islamic religion. More specifically, it was a battle against those who systematically perpetuated this duality – Hausa rulers and Muslim religious scholars who served as their political and legislative counsellors. These *ʿulamāʾ* were the subject of harsh criticism from Usman dan Fodio for participating in some of the traditional rituals while also being entrusted with religious education and the observation of Muslim festivities.[43] The ultimate goal of the purifying jihad was to establish a *Dār al-Islām* (territory of Islam) which is built on abiding by the *Sharia.* One of the key successes of the Shehu in this endeavour was that he managed to spread his commitment for purifying religion among fighters. He vested them with a conviction of mission, which ensured that each and every military campaign was legitimated by the full force of the doctrine of jihad resulting in a maximum motivation of the soldiers.[44]

In his sermons and works advocating and justifying the jihad, the Shehu often resorted to strongly intellectual reasoning. He drew heavily on the religious-intellectual discourse of his era, which was replete with apocalyptic visions and moods. He utilized the element of the approaching end of the world especially during combat, in order to win the support of all Muslims and to encourage and discipline his fighters. After the final victory in 1808 his rhetoric shifted, he rejected the end of the world conception and instead designated himself as a *mujaddid* (Renewer of the Faith). This trait of being one of the elect is reflected also by miracles connected with the Shehu, such as when he was informed of the outcome of the final victorious battle of Alkalawa by Jinns before human messengers arrived. Another feature of the Shehu's religious-intellectual discourse was to draw parallels between significant events in Islamic history, especially from the Prophet's era, and between the episodes of his jihad.[45] He discerned such an analogy between the first victory of Fulani jihadist over Hausa rulers on the one hand and the Battle of Badr, a turning point in the Prophet Muhammad's struggle with his opponents among the Quraysh of Mecca, on the other hand.[46] The effort to draw parallels is evident in the

[43] Fillitz, Thomas. "'Uthmân dan Fodio et la question du pouvoir en pays haoussa," 212-213.
[44] Smaldone, J.P. *Warfare in the Sokoto Caliphate: Historical and sociological perspectives*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977, 35.
[45] Fillitz, Thomas. "'Uthmân dan Fodio et la question du pouvoir en pays haoussa," 216-218.
[46] Arnett, E.J. *The rise of the Sokoto Fulani of Sultan Muḥammad Bello*. Kano: Emirate Printing Department, 1922, 54.

adoption of classical Islamic titles as well, such as *Amīr al-Muʾminīn* or Caliph. Apart from being an instrument of mobilization and motivation of fighters, this whole body of religious-intellectual reasoning had a crucial legitimizing function as well. It formed the core justification of the Shehu's portrayal of the war with Hausa rulers as a jihad against unbelievers.[47]

Religious discourse was inextricably intertwined with the military aspects of the Fulani jihad as well. The Shehu did not participate in battles himself, he passed military command to his brother, Abdullahi dan Muhammadu, and son, Muhammadu Bello.[48] He nevertheless played a central role in justifying the fighting and in shaping the discourse of the jihad. How the jihad was portrayed in contemporary sources is remarkable from the point of view of future jihads and confrontations with religious rhetoric as well. For instance the Shehu's son, Muhammadu Bello, described the events of the jihad as follows: "The Lord broke the army of the godless, so that they fell back [. . .]. We followed at their heels and slew them with great slaughter [. . .]. God alone knows the number of those who perished."[49] It is of course difficult to reconstruct a historically accurate chain of events from such narratives. What is clear, however, is that at least in the discourse the ambition of total eradication of unbelievers was present. It has to be kept in mind that this radicalism and militancy is also a part of Usman Dan Fodio's legacy, apart from his reform endeavours in religion, administration, or education.

Apart from religious reasoning, the Shehu built the Fulani jihad also on more worldly grounds, namely the already existing social and political tension between the sedentary agriculturalist Hausa of Gobir and the mainly nomadic pastoralist Fulani. The Fulani had grazing concession from Hausa and other local rulers but were limited to protect settled peasant subjects and had to pay the cattle-tax (*jangali*). The severity with which the *Sarkin* of Gobir ordered the cattle tax to be collected, alienated him from his Fulani subjects and led to animosity and friction between the Hausa ruling class and Fulani herdsmen. When the jihad broke out, the Fulani rose up in sympathy with the Shehu. Each clan leader fought his own "holy war" against his Hausa host, ousted him and emerged as the local emir within what, in due course, became the Fulani empire.[50] Like many other frictions, the longstanding tension between peasants and nomads was translated into a religious issue, i.e. the absence of *Sharia* legitimacy to levy such a cattle tax.[51] In a work on the differences between Islamic governance and the governance of unbelievers (*Kitāb al-farq bayn wilāyāt ahl al-islām wa bayn wilāyāt ahl al-kufr*), attributed to Usman dan Fodio, the Shehu pointed out that this tax was not one of the seven forms of taxations

[47] Fillitz, Thomas. "'Uthmân dan Fodio et la question du pouvoir en pays haoussa," 217.
[48] Fillitz, Thomas. "'Uthmân dan Fodio et la question du pouvoir en pays haoussa," 216.
[49] Johnston, H. A. S. *The Fulani Empire of Sokoto*, 46.
[50] Hiskett, Mervyn. "The nineteenth-century jihads in West Africa," 138.
[51] Hiskett, Mervyn. *The sword of truth: The life and times of the Shehu Usuman Dan Fodio,* 143-144.

authorized by Islamic law.[52] Some additional support for the uprising may have stemmed from Hausa peasants themselves who felt over-taxed and oppressed by their rulers.[53]

The ethnic factor and especially tribal bonds outlined above are crucial to understand where the wide popular support for the Shehu's jihad stemmed from. Tribalism was one of the vices the Shehu sought to eliminate. He maintained that as all people are alike for Allah, they should be alike to one another, provided they are Muslims. Even if he rated family ties and obligations as supremely important, he regarded those commitments secondary to the following of the *Sharia* and to the obedience and subjugation to Allah. Considering this stance, it was one of the deep failures of the jihad of Usman dan Fodio that it increasingly turned Fulani against Hausa, instead of Muslims against apostates. The reasons for this gradual tribalization of the jihad are complex; they reside in diverging subsistence patterns, the logic and dynamics of political alliances and the strategies for recruiting converts for the movement.[54] There is no doubt that the clan organization, which linked the Shehu's sedentary and clerical Toronkawa clan with their nomadic Fulani kinsfolk and with certain literate Berber Muslim clans, greatly assisted the Shehu in forging alliances for his jihad.[55]

1.4 The Caliphate of Sokoto

After the fall of Alkalawa and the final collapse of Gobir in 1808, the jihad entered its second stage of expansion to the edges of Hausaland and beyond. The jihad which was at first a series of limited and largely defensive actions within Gobir, Kebbi and Zamfara, had by 1808 burgeoned into an open war of conquest against the surrounding kingdoms of Kano, Zaria, Nupe and others, including the ancient Islamic kingdom of Bornu to the south and west from Lake Chad. These outlying campaigns, though inspired by the Shehu, were conducted by clan leaders within the Fulani genealogical network. When successful, they became emirs, that is, military governors of the territories they had conquered, and thenceforth stood in feudatory relationship to the Shehu.[56]

Concurrently with its continuing expansion, the jihad entered a phase of consolidation and state building. By 1812 a Fulani Muslim empire was in being, which aspired to constitute a *Dār al-Islām* inspired by the early Caliphate of the Prophet's successors. It was constructed, as far as possible, according to the received Islamic constitutional pattern and it established

[52] Hiskett, Mervyn. "Kitāb al-farq: A Work on the Habe Kingdoms Attributed to 'Uthmān dan fodio," 571.
[53] Islahi, Abdul Azim. "Shehu Uthman Dan Fodio and his economic ideas," 10.
[54] Beek, Walter E. A. van. "Purity and statecraft: the Fulani jihad and its empire," 170.
[55] Hiskett, Mervyn. "The nineteenth-century jihads in West Africa," 134.
[56] Hiskett, Mervyn. "The nineteenth-century jihads in West Africa," 141.

Sharia as the basis of practical law. As a consequence, the cattle-tax abhorred by the pastoralist Fulani was abolished and replaced by approved Muslim taxes. [57] The new empire was even styled a "caliphate", in conscious imitation of the classical Islamic polity.[58]

As far as organization is concerned, the Caliphate was a loose confederation of Emirates under nominal control from the newly founded walled city of Sokoto. The Emirs were largely independent in governance but they invariably ascribed to the religious supremacy of the Shehu and his successors.[59] After the establishment of the Sokoto Caliphate, Usman dan Fodio entrusted his brother, Abdullahi dan Muhammadu, and son, Muhammadu Bello, with the administration of the state. He divided the Caliphate to a western half, ruled by Abdullahi from Gwandu, and an eastern half, ruled by Muhammadu Bello from Sokoto. In theory, the Shehu presided over both halves, but in fact he devoted himself more and more to scholarship and teaching, and left the administration of the empire to his two lieutenants. As a sign of his superior position in the empire, he assumed the title of the Caliph, whose role was to ensure good governance and guide the conduct of Muslims. Shortly before his death in 1817, he proclaimed his son to be his successor as the Caliph of Sokoto while his brother was entrusted with the regency of the Emirate of Gwandu. The reason for his designation of his son as successor lay in the uncompromising religious zeal of his brother. Abdullahi dan Muhammadu demanded a radical split from all non-Islamic practices which was incompatible with the rather pragmatic and moderate approach of the Shehu towards the building of his empire.[60]

In 1817 the Shehu died. The Fulani empire passed to his son, Muhammadu Bello, who became the consolidator and administrative architect of an empire won by his father's charismatic leadership.[61] In the half-century following the jihad the Fulani empire constituted a loosely knit feudal empire of emirates, over which Sokoto exercised political and moral authority. The individual emirs stayed largely autonomous within their provinces, but paid tribute to Sokoto, and certainly referred to Sokoto in matters of administration and religion.[62] By the middle of the 19th century, when the Sokoto Caliphate was at its greatest extent, it comprised thirty emirates and the capital district of Sokoto. All the important Hausa emirates, including Kano which was the wealthiest and most populous, were under the authority of

[57] Beek, Walter E. A. van. "Purity and statecraft: the Fulani jihad and its empire," 162.
[58] Hiskett, Mervyn. "The nineteenth-century jihads in West Africa," 141.
[59] Beek, Walter E. A. van. "Purity and statecraft: the Fulani jihad and its empire," 162.
[60] Fillitz, Thomas. "'Uthmân dan Fodio et la question du pouvoir en pays haoussa," 218.
[61] Hiskett, Mervyn. "The nineteenth-century jihads in West Africa," 141.
[62] Hiskett, Mervyn. "Kitāb al-farq: A Work on the Habe Kingdoms Attributed to 'Uthmān dan fodio," 579.

Sokoto.[63] It has remained a centre for scholarship and pilgrimage as well as the capital of the largest state in West Africa throughout the 19th century.[64]

The Muslim theocratic system established by the Shehu and his successors provided stable government for decades to come, but by the second half of the 19th century the centrifugal tendencies inherent in all loose feudal empires had begun to operate. Despite the increasing incidence of war and revolt within the Sokoto Caliphate, the structure held together, and had not entirely broken down when the area passed under British control at the beginning of the 20th century. It is therefore possible to conclude that during the century after the jihad the least the Fulani empire did reflect, though with diminishing effectiveness, the pattern of political change and religious reform which Shehu Usman dan Fodio had sought to bring about.[65]

1.5 Usman dan Fodio as a scholar and Islamic promoter

Born to a family of *Mālikī* religious scholars, Usman dan Fodio was educated in the Koran and in Islamic religious sciences from his childhood. Together with his brother Abdullahi, he acquired knowledge in the disciplines of grammar, law, rhetoric, tradition, exegesis, and history, and received licences to teach these disciplines (*ijāzāt*). He had numerous teachers, two of whom had a decisive influence on his later views. The first was his uncle and the second the Berber Shaykh Jibrīl b. ʿUmar.[66] They introduced him to the works of classical authors of the Islamic religion and sciences. Through Jibrīl he got also acquainted with the rich tradition of Sufi brotherhoods in the western Sudan, especially with the tradition of Agadez.[67] To some extent, Jibrīl's message echoed also the *Wahhabi* teachings of a revived and uncompromising Islam that were gaining acceptance in the Arab peninsula those very years.[68]

This education has convinced Usman dan Fodio of the need to purify Islam in his country and to promote Islamic practices untouched by local non-Islamic traditions. Compared to his teacher Jibrīl, however, he was theologically rather moderate. While Jibrīl, a rigorist, claimed that all sin was equivalent to apostasy, the Shehu disagreed. He understood sin as a continuum ranging from disobedience to apostasy and rejected Jibrīl's tenet of anathematizing Muslims for disobedience to religious norms. This viewpoint provided the Shehu with legal

[63] Library of Congress – Federal Research Division. *Country Profile: Nigeria*, 3.
[64] Last, Murray. *The Sokoto Caliphate*. London: Longman, 1967, 113.
[65] Hiskett, Mervyn. "Kitāb al-farq: A Work on the Habe Kingdoms Attributed to 'Uthmān dan fodio," 579.
[66] Fillitz, Thomas. "'Uthmân dan Fodio et la question du pouvoir en pays haoussa," 212.
[67] Fillitz, Thomas. "'Uthmân dan Fodio et la question du pouvoir en pays haoussa," 217.
[68] Beek, Walter E. A. van. "Purity and statecraft: the Fulani jihad and its empire," 155.

justification for his attempt to revert Muslims to pure Islamic beliefs without the necessity of adjudging the death penalty which has been traditionally meted out for apostasy.[69]

The preaching and jihad of Usman dan Fodio has been undoubtedly a milestone in the history and spread of Islam in the western Sudan. Many of his tenets have, however, been introduced in the area already centuries before and the Shehu drew heavily on this legacy in his teaching and works. The desire to purify Islamic beliefs and practices, as well as the criticism of religious syncretism and its instruments – *ʿulamāʾ* of little education – has been provably present in the western Sudan already in the 15th century. It is documented in the works of the acclaimed religious scholar of North African descent, al-Maghīlī,[70] who was admitted to the court of the Songhay Emperor, as well as that of the Sultan of Kano.[71] At the courts al-Maghīlī provided legal advice (*fatāwī*) and as a member of the *Qādiriyya* order of Sufi mystics, he inspired the devotion of succeeding generations of western Sudanese Muslims to the order.[72] The problem of impurity, as well as the insufficient knowledge of Islamic promoters, seems to have persisted until the Shehu's time as the same complaints appear also in Fulani manuscripts from the 18th century. The Shehu himself labelled religious scholars infused with syncretic beliefs and living under the patronage of Hausa kings *ʿulamāʾ as-sūʾi*, i.e. "venal malams."[73] [74]

There are also other aspects of the reform tradition, characteristic of the tenets of the Shehu, which apparently owe their origin to al-Maghīlī. It is al-Maghīlī's correspondence that is believed to be the first record of the already briefly addressed Messianic doctrine of Islam in the western Sudan.[75] The Messianic tradition teaches that God will send in every century a reformer who will renew the faith (*mujaddid*), drive injustice from the land, and prepare it for the arrival of the *Mahdī*, the redeemer of Islam who will rule before the End of Time.[76] The doctrine had been crucial for the argumentation of the Shehu and of later religious reformers in the 18th and 19th century, and became one of the main pillars of the Fulani movement. Militant approach towards religious reform, reminiscent of the Fulani jihadists, is also evident in al-Maghīlī's system of thought. He claimed that holy war against Muslims who continue in the practice of paganism is better and more meritorious than holy war against unbelievers (!!). He

[69] Hiskett, Mervyn. "The nineteenth-century jihads in West Africa," 144-145.
[70] Hiskett, Mervyn. "An Islamic Tradition of Reform in the Western Sudan from the Sixteenth to the Eighteenth Century," 580.
[71] Fillitz, Thomas. "'Uthmân dan Fodio et la question du pouvoir en pays haoussa," 210.
[72] Hiskett, Mervyn. "The nineteenth-century jihads in West Africa," 129.
[73] *Malam* is the Hausa equivalent of the Arabic *muʿallim*, i.e. teacher, used mainly to refer to Muslim Hausa literates.
[74] Hiskett, Mervyn. "An Islamic Tradition of Reform in the Western Sudan from the Sixteenth to the Eighteenth Century," 581.
[75] Hiskett, Mervyn. "An Islamic Tradition of Reform in the Western Sudan from the Sixteenth to the Eighteenth Century," 584.
[76] Hiskett, Mervyn. "The nineteenth-century jihads in West Africa," 128-129.

also protested against illegal imposts and similar corrupt misappropriations of peoples' properties. Both these elements – militancy against the holders of syncretic beliefs and protesting attitude towards socio-religious oppression – are echoed in manuscripts from the Fulani period and constituted the core of the Shehu's reform efforts. Finally, al-Maghīlī advocated the establishment of the *Sharia* administered by a strong central theocracy, which was revived by the Shehu 300 years later; while his justification for the wars of conquest of the Songhay Empire was available to support the Fulani jihad.[77]

The dependence of the Shehu and Fulani scholars upon al-Maghīlī is clear. His teachings, however, constituted only a part of the intellectual foundation upon which the Fulani movement rested. The Timbuktu tradition of *Mālikī* orthodoxy represented a solid ground for the Shehu's developing system of religious thought. In a more practical way, the distant ideal of Mecca and Medina, the holy places of Islam, and especially the Abbāsid model of state and constitution provided him with inspiration for building his Caliphate. He succeeded in adopting the complex hierarchized structure of the Abbāsid Caliphate and establishing a similar system in the course of the Fulani jihad.[78]

The possible influence of fundamentalist *Wahhabi* doctrines has already been alleged in connection with Shaykh Jibrīl. While direct inspiration from *Wahhabism* and the works of Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb is at best doubtful, it is certain that Islamic scholars in the 18th-century western Sudan were well acquainted with some of the teachings that *Wahhabism* sprang from. This is well documented by references made in Fulani manuscripts at the works of Ibn Ḥanbal, or Ibn al-Qayyim al-Ḥanbalī, the pupil and disciple of Ibn Taymīya.[79] On the other hand, traits of Sufi mysticism are also clearly discernible. The era of the Shehu's jihad was in the wider Islamic world marked by a general Sufi revival, stemming from al-Azhar in Cairo. It came in reaction to *Wahhabi* attacks of mysticism during the second half of the 18th century. This revival spurred the ancient *Qādiriyya* order, which was widespread also in the western Sudan, into renewed and militant activity. It had profound impact on the Fulani reformers of Hausaland as well.[80] The Shehu experienced several visions in which the founder of the *Qādiriyya* order appeared to him and offered him guidance. Contrastingly to *Wahhabi* teaching,

[77] Hiskett, Mervyn. "An Islamic Tradition of Reform in the Western Sudan from the Sixteenth to the Eighteenth Century," 584-586.
[78] Hiskett, Mervyn. "An Islamic Tradition of Reform in the Western Sudan from the Sixteenth to the Eighteenth Century," 591-592.
[79] Hiskett, Mervyn. "An Islamic Tradition of Reform in the Western Sudan from the Sixteenth to the Eighteenth Century," 593.
[80] Hiskett, Mervyn. "The nineteenth-century jihads in West Africa," 126.

he refuted the denial of the miracles of the *walīs* (holy men possessed of miraculous powers), and saw *Qādiriyya* in broadly positive terms, as a vehicle for reform in the Sudan.[81]

In order to make his message understood, the Shehu preached mostly in Hausa and in Fulfude. He welcomed women in his audience, who in his opinion should not have been left in ignorance.[82] He also objected to the separation of men and women in public spaces and during sermons.[83] This approach was no novelty in the late 18th-centry western Sudan. The Shehu's daughter, Asmau Nana, a scholarly woman herself, testifies in one of her poems that learned women "of the Shehu's clan reached as many as a hundred." Learning was accessible to women from other *Qādiriyya* communities as well, as Sufism in the western Sahel in general held the tenet that education was important for every individual.[84] Asmau Nana collected, edited, and translated her father's works and contributed to the development of the ideology of the West African jihad movement. [85] Her works are essential for piecing together the Shehu's life story and for identifying other characters who played an essential role in the Fulani jihad.[86]

Apart from the testimonies of family members and followers, the Shehu left behind a considerable body of written legacy. His criticism of the Habe kingdoms (Habe dynasties were the traditional rulers of Hausa states),[87] his experiences, and his eventual call to the jihad are recorded in his poems. Apart from that, he wrote over fifty scholarly works, discussing doctrinal and judicial matters, outlining the proper way for everyday life, or explaining the principles of Sufism. In his *Bayān wujūb al-hijra ʿalá al-ʿibád (Explanation of the necessity of "hijra" to the worshippers)*, the Shehu addressed the disputed question whether it is possible for a Muslim to live within the *Dār al-kufr* (territory of unbelief). While Muslim literates enjoying the patronage of Hausa courts maintained that, so far as Muslims could practise their religion, this was allowed, the Shehu did not agree. He deemed *hijra* obligatory under circumstances prevailing in Gobir in 1804, which was an important part of the justification for the launch of his jihad.[88] In another significant work attributed to Usman dan Fodio on Muslim governance and on the governance of the unbelievers (*Kitāb al-farq bayn wilāyāt ahl al-islām wa bayn*

[81] Hiskett, Mervyn. "The nineteenth-century jihads in West Africa," 136.
[82] Fillitz, Thomas. "'Uthmân dan Fodio et la question du pouvoir en pays haoussa," 212-213.
[83] Fillitz, Thomas. "'Uthmân dan Fodio et la question du pouvoir en pays haoussa," 217.
[84] Boyd, Jean, Mack, Beverly, eds. *Collected Works of Nana Asma'u: Daughter of Usman Dan Fodiyo, (1793-1864).* African Historical Sources, Volume 9. East Lansing, MI, USA: Michigan State University Press, 1997, 3.
[85] "Asmau, Nana." In *The Oxford Dictionary of Islam*. Esposito, John L., ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003. Available from: http://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/acref/9780195125580.001.0001/acref-9780195125580-e-222.
[86] Boyd, Jean, Mack, Beverly, eds. *Collected Works of Nana Asma'u: Daughter of Usman Dan Fodiyo, (1793-1864)*, 160-175.
[87] Shoup, John A. *Ethnic Groups of Africa and the Middle East: An Encyclopedia*. Santa Barbara, California: ABC-CLIO, 2011, 117.
[88] Hiskett, Mervyn. "The nineteenth-century jihads in West Africa," 145.

wilāyāt ahl al-kufr), the Shehu meticulously describes a system of governance in which the Caliph appoints a sultan in each of the provinces of the country, who is then responsible for overseeing emirs in his province and the decrees they introduce.[89] This theoretical system is in fact strongly reminiscent of the loose confederation-like system that Usman dan Fodio established later on in the Sokoto Caliphate. Further the work details what Muslims in their government should and should not do. It calls for reforming both religious and temporal affaires in a way which would strip them of non-Islamic features and it insists that every governor should wage holy war against the unbelievers, repair mosques, and take care of the poor and needy.[90] Most of these scholarly works were written in Arabic, while most of the Shehu's poems were composed in Fulani.[91]

It is evident that theology and politics were inseparable in all of the Shehu's endeavours. Most of his works were written either in apology and justification for having resorted to waging jihad, or addressed the issue of Islamic governance and practices. He aimed to rediscover and restore the basic principles of Islam, but the appeal to the ideal model of the Prophet's community and the Medina constitution seems to be more sentimental and terminological than real. When it suited his purpose he appealed to the past. Otherwise, he made use of the proximate ideas and sentiments of his day. He used the persuasiveness of his preaching, legal argumentation and war to turn his ideals into reality.[92]

During his lifetime, the Shehu's views and ambitions went through substantial development. He gradually expanded his criticism of false *ʿulamāʾ* who misled believers to elites who regarded Islam only as a means of legitimization. The manner of accomplishing his reform ambitions evolved from preaching, through revolt and jihad, to Islamic governance. His self-profiling altered accordingly from *Mahdī,* associated with the End of Time and with radical change, to *mujaddid* who is linked to more gradual re-formulation. He embraced the unifying concept of the Caliphate and brought the various peoples that made up Hausaland into one single polity. In the Sokoto Caliphate he was able to propound and implement a theory of governance which succeeded, for a time, in realizing most of his reform aims.[93] Though not a strongly centralised state, the Caliphate was also able to ensure a certain level of security, stability and a unitary justice system.[94] This model of loose theocracy, united by a central

[89] Hiskett, Mervyn. "Kitāb al-farq: A Work on the Habe Kingdoms Attributed to 'Uthmān dan Fodio," 560.
[90] Hiskett, Mervyn. "Kitāb al-farq: A Work on the Habe Kingdoms Attributed to 'Uthmān dan Fodio," 570.
[91] Beek, Walter E. A. van. "Purity and statecraft: the Fulani jihad and its empire," 158.
[92] Hiskett, Mervyn. "The nineteenth-century jihads in West Africa," 146-148.
[93] Fillitz, Thomas. "'Uthmân dan Fodio et la question du pouvoir en pays haoussa," 219.
[94] Sulaiman, Ibrahim. *A Revolution in History: The Jihad of Usman Dan Fodio*, i.

religious authority and values, served as inspiration for religious reformers for centuries to come.[95]

1.6 The inheritors of the Shehu's legacy and the impact of the 19th-century jihads in West Africa

The influence of the jihad of Usman dan Fodio on West African Islam was immediate. In the first half of the 19th century several other jihads in the region aimed at dispersing a pure version of Islam, the ensuing empires were, however, not as long-lasting as the Sokoto Caliphate.[96] These included the Adamawa Emirate of Modibbo Adama, the Masina Empire of Seku Amadu, and the Tukolor Empire of al-Hājj ʿUmar Tal.[97]

While the immediate origin of each of these jihadist movements lay in the confluence of local causes, a number of important patterns which link them to each other and especially to the jihad of Usman dan Fodio are clearly discernible. All the examined jihads occurred in analogous socio-religious settings of mixed Islam. What is more important, however, is that all of the reform movements responded to this reality by military means based on idealistic and intellectual argumentation for the need of purifying Islam. Another parallel is the importance of kinship groups, as well as the tension between established *ʿulamāʾ* and religious reformers.[98]

The 19th-century jihads in the western Sudan had a number of major, long-lasting consequences for society, state, and religion in West Africa, the effect of which is still perceptible. The reform movements gave rise to entirely new political and constitutional systems, and introduced new governing elites, in most cases of a different ethnic group from those displaced. In Hausaland, the Hausa ruling class was replaced and the Fulani ascended to governance. Later on, when the Fulani jihads extended to largely non-Muslim areas, the ethnic line between Hausa and Fulani started to blur. Their shared Islamic religion constituted a common ground for waging jihad against neighbouring pagan groups. The result was the emergence of the Hausa-Fulani ethnic group in today's northern Nigeria, which was characterised, apart from common religion, increasingly also by shared culture. On the other hand, the Hausa-Fulani unity led to intensifying raiding and tribute taking from non-Muslims. Therefore, some see the Shehu's early 19th-century jihad as a major sources of the dichotomy

[95] Fillitz, Thomas. "'Uthmân dan Fodio et la question du pouvoir en pays haoussa," 219.
[96] Fillitz, Thomas. "'Uthmân dan Fodio et la question du pouvoir en pays haoussa," 219.
[97] Islahi, Abdul Azim. "Shehu Uthman Dan Fodio and his economic ideas," 6.
[98] Conclusions drawn from the consultation of principally the following sources: on the jihad of Modibbo Adama: Johnston, H. A. S. *The Fulani Empire of Sokoto*, 80-87; on the jihad of Seku Amadu: Hiskett, Mervyn. "The nineteenth-century jihads in West Africa," 151-154; and on the jihad of al-Hājj ʿUmar Tal: Hiskett, Mervyn. "The nineteenth-century jihads in West Africa," 155-164.

between Muslims and non-Muslims in the present-day North-Middle Belt of Nigeria and in adjacent areas.[99]

From the perspective of West African Islam, the 19th-century jihads in the western Sudan brought about the consolidation of Muslim culture in Hausaland and neighbouring areas. They accelerated the dissemination of Islamic literacy, particularly in Hausa and Fulfulde-speaking areas, and the setting up new centres of Islamic education. Another important phenomenon originating in this period was the urbanization of West African Islam and of Islamic intellectual activity. The jihads have also contributed to the creation of a strong sentiment of Islamic identity, which proved to be of great importance in the era of colonization. In Islamic areas, the arriving new secular education of the colonial administrations had to compete with an entrenched system of Islamic literacy and education. Consequently, the progress of Western education and technology was slow and resisted, especially in comparison with the non-Islamic areas of West Africa, which had no significant indigenous tradition of literacy before the Europeans arrived in their societies.[100] The 19th-century jihads have further greatly strengthened the hold of Sufi orders, especially the *Qādiriyya* and the *Tijāniyya*, in West Africa and extended not only their religious, but also political, social and educational role.[101]

Finally, the intellectual and perhaps more personal influence of the Shehu on his immediate followers and on upcoming generations of religious reformers is noteworthy as well. The Shehu left behind himself a rich legacy, which served as inspiration for many decades to come. It is a legacy of the small jihad of the war but also of the great jihad of the spirit which encompasses the values of soberness, austerity and scholarship. It is particularly this second great jihad that the Shehu preached and deemed as most important to establish the *Dār al-Islām*.[102] It did to a varying degree influence his immediate followers. It is, however, questionable to what extent did upcoming revivalist movements embrace this spiritual and essentially non-violent part of his legacy.

[99] Aremu, Johnson Olaosebikan. "The Fulani Jihad and its Implication for National Integration and Development in Nigeria." *African Research Review*, Vol. 5, No. 22 (2011): 9-10.
[100] Hiskett, Mervyn. "The nineteenth-century jihads in West Africa," 167-168.
[101] Hiskett, Mervyn. "The nineteenth-century jihads in West Africa," 169.
[102] Beek, Walter E. A. van. "Purity and statecraft: the Fulani jihad and its empire," 163.

2 Reformist Islamist movements in the second half of the 20th century

The first half of the 20th century was marked in the Western Sudan by the expansion of British and French rule from coastal regions into the West African hinterland and by the consolidation of colonial control. In 1914 the British colony of Nigeria was created through the merger of the protectorates of Northern and Southern Nigeria. The northern part of the colony, the boundaries of which almost overlapped the Sokoto caliphate, was the model for the creation and the establishment of the so called "dual mandate" or "indirect rule." The essence of this system of rule was to lean on established political forces within the Muslim community, in the case of northern Nigeria on the heirs of the Sokoto caliphate.[103] As most of this elite belonged to the *Qādiriyya*, the British administration considered the order part of the "Native Administration," and regarded it as a potential mechanism for the establishment of peaceful cooperation.[104]

As a result, during the colonial period the major local power remained in the hands of the *Qādiriyya*. It was attracting new followers and negotiating with the colonial authorities. In the course of the decolonization, the *tarīqa* went through a process of politicization and its leaders became involved mostly in the conservative and regional Northern Peoples' Congress (NPC).[105] The party was led by Sir Ahmadu Bello, the formal leader of Sokoto and a descendant of Usman dan Fodio. He also acted as Prime Minister of the Northern Region in the first Nigerian Republic.[106]

At the same time, however, a different tendency was unfolding. From the 1950s the centrality of traditional elites and Sufi orders started to be challenged by an emerging movement of Islamic reform and renewal (*tajdīd*). Reformers directed their activities and rhetoric mostly against the socio-political establishment which they regarded as un-Islamic.[107] They were most easily discernible in their anti-Sufi stance which was at least partially built on the characterization of Sufi brotherhoods as collaborators with colonial authorities.[108] Another

[103] Back, Irit. "From the Colony to the Post-Colony: Sufis and Wahhâbîsts in Senegal and Nigeria." *Canadian Journal of African Studies / Revue Canadienne des Études Africaines.* Vol. 42, No. 2/3 (2008): 427-428.
[104] Hiskett, Mervyn. *The Development of Islam in West Africa*. London: Longman, 1984, 285-288.
[105] Back, Irit. "From the Colony to the Post-Colony: Sufis and Wahhâbîsts in Senegal and Nigeria," 431.
[106] "Fulani Dynasty." In *The Oxford Dictionary of Islam*. Esposito, John L., ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003. Available from: http://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/acref/9780195125580.001.0001/acref-9780195125580-e-679.
[107] Loimeier, Roman. "Islamic Reform and Political Change: The Example of Abubakar Gumi and the Yan Izala Movement in Northern Nigeria." In Evers Rosander, Eva and Westerlund, David, eds. *African Islam and Islam in Afrcia: Encounters between Sufis and Islamists*. London: Hurst and Co., 1997, 286.
[108] Back, Irit. "From the Colony to the Post-Colony: Sufis and Wahhâbîsts in Senegal and Nigeria," 433.

noticeable trait was the demand for changes in the educational sphere, calling for more extensive Islamic education.

2.1 The rise of the Izala movement in northern Nigeria

The reform movement drew heavily on the legacy of earlier Islamic reformers, al-Maghīlī and Usman dan Fodio.[109] On the other hand, the penetration of foreign *Wahhabi* influences, facilitated by modern communication and transportation networks, also contributed to the general climate of Islamic revivalism and purification. The most vocal advocate of the Islamic reform movement in northern Nigeria, ensuing in the second half of the 20th century from the above outlined dual influence, was Abubakar Gumi.

Abubakar Gumi was born in 1924 in a small village in Sokoto province. In his youth, he studied the *Quran* but was also sent to elementary school which formed a part of the colonial education system. He later acquired more thorough Islamic knowledge at the Kano Law School. Similarly to the Shehu, he aspired to purify and reform the lax Islam practiced by his coreligionists. His first major dispute with the religious establishment concerned the practice of *tayammum*, the ritual ablution before prayer with sand instead of water, which was regularly practiced despite the widely available water. The Sultan of Sokoto stood by the religious establishment. This clearly demonstrates the transformation which this office has undergone since the Shehu's times – from the bastion of reform to that of tradition.

Thanks to his mastery of religious argumentation, Gumi was victorious in his dispute with the Sultan which gained him fame for the first time. Following his triumph he went on the *hajj* where he met Ahmadu Bello, the Prime Minister of Northern Nigeria and descendent of the Shehu Usman dan Fodio. Gumi became Bello's advisor on religious affairs and was appointed Grand Kadi of the North in 1962. He was a major opponent of Sufi brotherhoods which in his view made political unity among Muslims impossible.[110] Initially, however, under pressure from Bello, he sought to reconcile conflicting Islamic groups through his proposition of the establishment of the Society for the Victory of Islam (*Jamāʿat an-Nasr al-Islām*), an organisation aiming to transcend divisions among Muslim in Nigeria.[111]

[109] Loimeier, Roman. "Islamic Reform and Political Change: The Example of Abubakar Gumi and the Yan Izala Movement in Northern Nigeria," 286.
[110] Loimeier, Roman. "Islamic Reform and Political Change: The Example of Abubakar Gumi and the Yan Izala Movement in Northern Nigeria," 288-290.
[111] "Jamatul Nasril Islam." In *The Oxford Dictionary of Islam*. Esposito, John L., ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003. Available from: http://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/acref/9780195125580.001.0001/acref-9780195125580-e-1171.

After the death of Ahmadu Bello and after transition to military rule in Nigeria in 1966, his fight against the Sufi brotherhood, as well as his criticism of the corrupt secular administration, became more intense.[112] He intensified his campaign for the *tajdīd* of Islam through mass media – special radio programmes and articles in Hausa newspapers. With his political patronage diminishing after the death of Bello, however, he needed a new support base to fulfil his religio-political reform aspirations.[113] In 1978 he founded in Kaduna The Society for the Removal of Innovation and the Establishment of the Sunna (*Jamā'at Izālat al-Bid'a wa-Iqāmat as-Sunna*), commonly known as Izala, or Yan Izala, which aimed at mobilising for his cause Muslim populations untouched by his learned disputations with the religious scholars of Sufi brotherhoods.

The programme of the Yan Izala was relatively simple, stressing the rejection of all *bid'a* and the purification of Nigerian Islam from Sufi practices deemed un-Islamic, such as *tawassul* (intercession) at the tombs of the dead, mystical rites, or pilgrimages to the tombs of the saints. It stressed the importance of the *Quran* and the *Sunna* as foundations of the faith, the necessity of *ijtihād* and fought against Sufi laxity in matters of Islamic law. The Salafist message of Izala increased discord and religious competition in northern Nigeria, particularly with the *Tijāniyya* Sufi order and local Christians.[114]

The conflict with *Tijāniyya*, the dominant Muslim grouping in north-east Nigeria, escalated between 1978 and 1980 with zealous preaching tours promoting purist versions of Islam in rural areas turning into violent confrontations in villages, towns and especially around *Tijāniyya* mosques.[115] The radical dissociation of Izala from former religious values provides some explanation for its aggressive militancy towards the representatives and symbols of the old system.[116] On the other hand, it also explains the violent reaction of the Sufi brotherhoods which were facing the loss of their traditional religious but also political authority in a new religious and power structure.[117] *Tijāniyya* encountered serious difficulties in countering Izala's argumentation, as it followed scrupulously the teachings of the Prophet and Islamic doctrine. It had to make several concessions, adopting some of the purists' demands, but also defended its

[112] Back, Irit. "From the Colony to the Post-Colony: Sufis and Wahhâbîsts in Senegal and Nigeria," 435.
[113] Loimeier, Roman. "Islamic Reform and Political Change," 290-292.
[114] Higazi, Adam. "Mobilisation into and against Boko Haram in North-East Nigeria." In Cahen, M., Pommerolle, M.-E., Tall, K., eds. *Collective Mobilisations in Africa: Contestation, Resistance, Revolt.* Leiden and Boston: Brill, forthcoming 2015.
[115] Harnischfeger, Johannes. "Boko Haram and its Muslim critics: Observations from Yobe State." In Pérouse de Montclos, Marc-Antoine, ed. *Boko Haram: Islamism, politics, security and the state in Nigeria*. Leiden: African Studies Centre, 2014, 37-38.
[116] For example whoever adopted the prayer posture and the recitations of the *Tijāniyya* made himself an unbeliever, someone whom anyone was allowed to kill.
Harnischfeger, Johannes. "Boko Haram and its Muslim critics: Observations from Yobe State," 56.
[117] Loimeier, Roman. "Islamic Reform and Political Change," 297.

ancestral heritage (family ceremonies, agricultural rituals).[118] The expansion of Izala suffered a heavy blow with the outbreak of the Maitatsine riots in 1980, in the wake of which Izala was forced to moderate its aggression on the Sufi brotherhoods in order to avoid being connected to the Maitatsine sect in Sufi polemics.[119] The political struggle, however, continued between the Yan Izala and the brotherhoods well into the 1980s, as will be described further on.

In its strong anti-Sufi stance, the Izala shows heavy *Wahhabi* influence. Apart from similarities in ideology and discourse, *Wahhabi* influence can also be implied from the fact that the Yan Izala received financial support from the Saudi-based Muslim World League and other Saudi individuals.[120] The Islamic reformism of Izala, however, is not a fully imported phenomenon but forms a part of a trend inspired by local elements.[121] The Izala movement was essentially the first to take up vehemently the purification agenda and legacy of the Shehu Usman dan Fodio in the post-independence era. The Shehu's inspiring model of *tajdīd* and the greatness of his Sokoto Caliphate were still alive in collective memory as sources of values and guidelines for both religious and political life. Consequently, references to the Shehu's socio-religious transformation and assertions of continuity between his jihad and Izala's Islamic activism pervaded Izala discourse.[122] Religious justification for Izala's violent opposition to the Sufi religious establishment supporting the corrupted political order was found in the Shehu's example of fighting against Muslim scholars who surrounded the religiously lax Hausa kings.[123] This reverence for the Shehu, who was closely affiliated with the *Qādiriyya* Sufi order, demonstrates how the stamping of Izala as an anti-Sufi *Wahhabi* movement fails to fully capture its complexity deriving from its local heritage and circumstances. It rarely even criticised the *Qādiriyya*,[124] realising that the claim of continuity with the Sokoto jihad was essential in winning over broad Muslim populations for the reformist cause of Izala.

The Yan Izala, led by its charismatic leader Abubakar Gumi, has been a major impetus in the revival of the tradition of Islamic militancy in northern Nigeria in the second half of the 20th century. It is, however, necessary to clarify the nature and object of this militant aggression. While Izala had been often involved in intense clashes with the brotherhoods, it never engaged

[118] Harnischfeger, Johannes. "Boko Haram and its Muslim critics: Observations from Yobe State," 45.
[119] Loimeier, Roman. "Islamic Reform and Political Change," 297.
[120] Loimeier, Roman. "Islamic Reform and Political Change," 292.
[121] Sounaye, Abdoulaye. "Heirs of the Sheikh Izala and its Appropriation of Usman Dan Fodio in Niger." *Cahiers d'études africaines*. Vol. 2, No. 206-207 (2012): 427.
[122] Sounaye, Abdoulaye. "Heirs of the Sheikh Izala and its Appropriation of Usman Dan Fodio in Niger," 427-428.
[123] Sounaye, Abdoulaye. "Heirs of the Sheikh Izala and its Appropriation of Usman Dan Fodio in Niger," 433-434.
[124] Loimeier, Roman. "Islamic Reform and Political Change," 292.

the state in any violent confrontation.[125] Gumi had certainly been critical of traditional rulers, corruption in government, and of declining moral values, but he was not against the established political system as such.[126] He situated his movement within the structures of the Nigerian federation,[127] engaging with it in order to have a chance to Islamize and reform it from inside. The Izala movement aspired to implement reforms that would gradually expand state-enforced *Sharia* legislation. This objective could only be reached through active involvement in power politics and the assumption of influential political posts by Izala representatives. The movement therefore strongly encouraged Muslims' political participation as well as the acquisition of Western-style education, for without official school certificates it was not possible to apply for senior positions in the state bureaucracy.[128]

The political chances of Muslims within the Nigerian federation were, however, tarnished by skirmishes among various Muslim factions and especially by the conflict between the *Tijāniyya* and the Izala. In 1979, the height of the aggression between the two adversaries, presidential elections were won by the Muslim candidate, Shehu Shagari, only by a very small margin, as the Muslim community failed to unite behind a single candidate. In the light of these results, Abubakar Gumi intensified his religious argumentation in favour of the electoral participation of Muslims and especially Muslim women,[129] famously arguing that "politics is more important than prayer." [130] This assertion triggered huge controversy but when read in context it becomes clear that the principle of the supremacy of religion over power politics holds true in the case of Gumi as well – he saw politics and elections as the sole way how Muslims "can predominate over the Non-Muslims"[131] and can gradually introduce *Sharia* legislation. Concurrently, non-affiliated Muslims undertook the task of reconciling the conflicting parties through the establishment of the *Council of Ulama* which was supposed to develop a common policy acceptable for all Muslims. Its success, however, had been only partial, the sole real factor able to politically unite Muslims being the threat of Christian candidates winning elections in Muslim majority constituencies. Under pressure from northern politicians, formal reconciliation was reached between the Yan Izala and Sufi brotherhoods in

[125] Adesoji, Abimbola O. "Between Maitatsine and Boko Haram: Islamic Fundamentalism and the Response of the Nigerian State." *Africa Today*. Vol. 57, No. 4. (2011): 112.
[126] Mohammed, Kyari. "The message and methods of Boko Haram." In Pérouse de Montclos, Marc-Antoine, ed. *Boko Haram: Islamism, politics, security and the state in Nigeria*. Leiden: African Studies Centre, 2014, 22.
[127] Higazi, Adam. "Mobilisation into and against Boko Haram in North-East Nigeria," 21.
[128] Harnischfeger, Johannes. "Boko Haram and its Muslim critics: Observations from Yobe State," 38.
[129] Loimeier, Roman. "Islamic Reform and Political Change," 293.
[130] Christelow, A. "Three Islamic Voices in Contemporary Nigeria." In Roff, W. R., ed. *Islam and the Political Economy of Meaning*. London: Croom Helm, 1987, 232.
[131] Christelow, A. "Three Islamic Voices in Contemporary Nigeria," 232.

1988 but unity was intrinsically bound to the existence of an external threat to the Muslims.[132] The tension between the Yan Izala and the brotherhoods was further weakened by the death of Abubakar Gumi in 1992. Without its charismatic leader, Izala's dynamic started to dwindle.

To complete this overview of the Izala movement and to better understand its position in northern Nigerian society, its societal support base will be put under scrutiny. Until the early 1980s, village chiefs with rudimentary knowledge of religious doctrines and often very lax attitude to Islamic practices had been in the centre of rural Islam in norther Nigeria. These traditional rulers were affiliated with *Tijāniyya* teachers giving latitude to their authority. Izala's preaching of the purification of a lax and adulterated Islam and of the pursuit of a socio-political order informed by the *Sunna* of the Prophet Muhammad polarised town and village communities. Old village culture and authority were challenged through the assertion that whoever did not follow Izala's literal interpretation of Islam was ritually impure, and thus it was forbidden to submit to his authority.

Izala presented Islamic law as straightforward, transparent, and rational as opposed to the complex and often financially demanding customs of old village culture. Izala preachers called for the prohibition of costly and un-Islamic festivities and sacrifices, and for the introduction of more modest social obligations. This demand touched upon everyday issues, such as inheritance or bride price payment. In matters of inheritance, Izala demanded strict obedience by Islamic law, according to which heirs gain full control over their share upon the death of their relatives. This stands in opposition with the traditional concept of each family member being allotted some land for farming under the supervision of an older family member. Izala also called for more modest bride price payments so that every man could afford to create a family. This social programme of Izala understandably appealed especially to the rural poor.[133]

Izala's message of religious purification attracted, above all, young and educated men, who used the language of orthodox Islam to distance themselves from their elders, inconsistent in their rejection of pagan traditions. It gained substantial support from intellectuals, university students, and civil servants who on the one hand despised the corrupt and dysfunctional state but on the other hand had to make a living in it. For this class, Izala also offered an apology of appropriating secular education and accepting jobs in an un-Islamic government.[134] The great influx of young and ambitious adherents can also be explained by the ban on political parties which was in place at the time. Yan Izala, as a religious movement, was, however, allowed to

[132] Loimeier, Roman. "Islamic Reform and Political Change," 301-305.
[133] Harnischfeger, Johannes. "Boko Haram and its Muslim critics: Observations from Yobe State," 43-44.
[134] Harnischfeger, Johannes. "Boko Haram and its Muslim critics: Observations from Yobe State," 38.

develop an organized network of followers, many of whom were wishing to engage themselves politically.[135] The substantial financial and political support that Izala received and its influence in local government further increased its appeal.

Izala's programme was attractive to the young also because it levelled social differences – what mattered when measuring the status of a person was piety and religious knowledge, not social background or kinship ties. Izala denounced ethnic prerogatives as un-Islamic, providing a level playing field for ethnic outcasts.[136] Izala also strove to diminish gender differences in education, gaining substantial numbers of women adherents.[137]

The movement has, however, been also opposed and criticised by many Nigerian Muslims. Representatives of the traditional power structure and of Sufi brotherhoods feared losing their authority and often even life due to Izala; the elderly, inherently bound to the hybrid Islam of their ancestors, accused Izala of undermining family ties and traditional village culture; and northern politicians argued that Izala has brought discord to the Muslim community. Others saw the leaders of Izala as hypocritical and greedy, for while they posed as an anti-establishment movement, articulating popular anger against the political class, on the level of local politics they found ways of getting along with politicians and businessmen, in case it was to their benefit.[138]

The contradictions inherent in the Yan Izala and the varied reactions it triggered from the Nigerian Muslim community demonstrate the immense diversity of Nigerian Islam. It also showcases the importance of local dynamics and political circumstances in the development of the system of authority and values governing the Muslim community. Still today it has a notable place in Nigerian Islam and has been crucial in shaping the path of its further development.

2.2 The origins and development of the Shiite movement of Nigeria

In the late 1970s and 1980s northern Nigeria experienced an unprecedented proliferation of reformist Islamist currents. Apart from already discussed local influence and Saudi financial support, the impact of the Iranian revolution of 1979 on the spread of these currents cannot be overlooked either. The example of the Islamic Revolution instilled in many Nigerian Muslim youths the possibility of using Islam as a vehicle for political and social transformation, and was a major source of Islamic radicalisation.

[135] Loimeier, Roman. "Islamic Reform and Political Change," 295.
[136] Harnischfeger, Johannes. "Boko Haram and its Muslim critics: Observations from Yobe State," 44.
[137] Loimeier, Roman. "Islamic Reform and Political Change," 296.
[138] Harnischfeger, Johannes. "Boko Haram and its Muslim critics: Observations from Yobe State," 47.

Iranian influence was particularly strong among members of the Muslim Students Society, led by a student of Abubakar Gumi. The multiple split of this group into various wings and factions well demonstrates the extreme abundance of reformist movements active at the time, as well as the huge diversity of opinions they stood for. To provide an example, the Muslim Students Society split into a wing called Dawa, supported by Saudi and Kuwaiti funds and stressing the fight against *bid'a*, and another wing named Umma, calling for the implementation of *Sharia* and the establishment of an Islamic state. The Umma wing itself split again into a faction called Hodaybiya, recalling in its name the Prophet's truce with the Meccans and favouring temporary accommodation with the secular state, and another group referred to as Yan Shia, taking its inspiration directly from the Islamic Revolution and bearing no compromise with the secular state.[139]

The Yan Shia, also called Shiites, or officially the Islamic Movement in Nigeria, is the most widely known and influential of the Iran-inspired reformist Islamist currents. It emerged in the late 1970s under the leadership of Ibrahim El-Zakzaky.[140] El-Zakzaky drew his inspiration from widely distributed Iranian revolutionary literature translated into English and Hausa, as well as from the works of Egyptian thinkers,[141] for instance Sayyid Qutb's *Al-Maʿālim fi't-Tarīq* (*Milestones along the Way*) in which the author argues for the impossibility of compromise between Islam and *jāhiliyya.*[142] [143]

El-Zakzaky has since the 70s been an outspoken critic of the corrupt state administration and of the insincere, populist attempts to introduce *Sharia* penal codes in northern states. The Yan Shia's objective, as opposed to such attempts, is to establish a genuine Islamic state governed by a purist version of *Sharia*, through preaching and subtle social influence. Thanks to El-Zakzaky's background as leader of the Muslim Students Society, many of the group's members are university educated, providing the Yan Shia with an intellectual and revolutionary foundation.[144] The Shiites have been involved in the organisation of anti-West protests and

[139] Hunwick, John. "Sub-Saharan Africa and the Wider World of Islam: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives." In Evers Rosander, Eva and Westerlund, David, eds. *African Islam and Islam in Afrcia: Encounters between Sufis and Islamists*. London: Hurst and Co., 1997, 39.
[140] Adesoji, Abimbola O. "Between Maitatsine and Boko Haram: Islamic Fundamentalism and the Response of the Nigerian State," 112.
[141] Pérouse de Montclos, Marc-Antoine. *Boko Haram : les enjeux régionaux de l'insurrection de Boko Haram dans le nord-est du Nigeria*. Fondation Jean-Jaurès, NOTE n° 246 (2015): 5.
[142] The term *jāhiliyya* originally refers to the times before the Prophet Muhammad and denotes "ignorance," or unawareness of God's will which was manifested through the Prophet.
Kropáček, Luboš. *Duchovní cesty islámu*. Praha: Vyšehrad, 2011, 9.
[143] Mohammed, Kyari. "The message and methods of Boko Haram," 22.
[144] Albert, Isaac O. "The Role of Communication in the Escalation of Ethnic and Religious Conflicts." In Uwazie, Ernest E., Albert, Isaac O. and Uzoigwe, Godfrey N., eds. *Interethnic and Religious Conflict Resolution in Nigeria*. Lanham, Md.: Lexington, 1999, 81-87.

occasional confrontations with state authorities, considered to be the instruments of evil, personified as Satan.[145] Most of the violent clashes with government forces have taken place in El-Zakzaky's hometown of Zaria during regular pro-Palestinian processions.[146]

The Islamic Movement in Nigeria, however, is mostly non-violent and community-based. Similarly to the Yan Izala, it emphasises education, establishing schools and centres known as *Fudiyyah*, named after the Shehu Usman dan Fodio. This clearly demonstrates that even though the Yan Shia is influenced most directly by Iran, it has committed itself to transmitting the Shehu's legacy. On its official website, the movement claims that the "beginning of the Islamic movement in Nigeria marked the resuscitation of the teachings of sheikh Usman bin Fodio." The teachings of the Shehu are interpreted here as an appeal to Muslims to stand up against oppression and to abide by God's laws. [147] Usman dan Fodio's legacy of purification has also taken up by the Shiites, but it is not any more directed against syncretic forms of Islam as in the times of the Shehu, nor against the un-orthodox practices of Sufi brotherhoods as in the case of Izala. The Yan Shia aspires to purify Nigerian Islam from the influence of "alien western culture, civilization and system of governance,"[148] foreshadowing the path taken by succeeding radical Islamist movements in Northern Nigeria.

[145] Adesoji, Abimbola O. "Between Maitatsine and Boko Haram: Islamic Fundamentalism and the Response of the Nigerian State," 112-113.
[146] See for example: Tukur, Sani. "UPDATE: 'Sheikh Zakzaky's Son, 10 Others Killed In Nigerian troops, Shiite Muslims Clash.'" *The Premium Times, Nigeria*. 25 July 2014. [01.08.2015]. Available from: http://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/165579-update-sheikh-zakzakys-son-10-others-killed-in-nigerian-troops-shiite-muslims-clash.html.
[147] "Madrasa." *Official website of the Islamic Movement in Nigeria*. 15 September 2011. [01.08.2015]. Available from: http://www.islamicmovement.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=102&Itemid=138.
[148] "Madrasa." *Official website of the Islamic Movement in Nigeria*.

3 The Maitatsine uprisings

The Maitatsine uprisings of 1980 to 1985 were the first major manifestation of Islamic fundamentalism in Nigeria, although they built on the precedent set by the Shiite movement in the late 1970s and 1980s.[149] The professed objective behind these uprisings was the purification of Islam from the influence of Western modernity. The group's anger was also directed against the secular state and Western technology and its products.[150] Here the resemblance with the Yan Shia is clearly discernible. The name Maitatsine is closely linked to the group's orientation. It is a Hausa expression meaning "the one who damns," derived from the regular cursing or swearing of the group's leader and alluding to his frequent, bitter public condemnation of the Nigerian state.[151]

Maitatsine was led by Muhammadu Marwa, a Cameroonian *malam* residing in the Nigerian city of Kano. By the early 1970s, Marwa had gathered a large and increasingly militant following, the Yan Tatsine (i.e. followers of Maitatsine).[152] It was in Kano that the first in the chain of Maitatsine riots broke out in 1980, followed by uprisings near Maiduguri and in Kaduna in 1982, in Yola in 1984, and in Bauchi in 1985. The revolt in Kano, the epicentre of Islamic agitation, was put down by military and police after substantial loss of lives, including that of Maitatsine's leader, Muhammadu Marwa. The insurgency did not end here, however. It spread to other cities in which the Yan Tatsine found refuge after the military crackdown in Kano, causing several thousands of deaths.[153]

Maitatsine and its creed fall into the *Mahdist* and messianic tradition of northern Nigeria, believing in the arrival of a new prophet who will purify Islam from external elements.[154] The group's leader, Marwa, claimed this post for himself, at first asserting he is a *mujaddid* (reformer) following in the footsteps of the Shehu Usman dan Fodio,[155] and later going as far as declaring himself a prophet. He rejected the authority of the Prophet Muhammad and of his *Sunna*. He for instance interpreted the Quranic verse "The East and the West belong to God. Whichever way you turn, there is the Face of God" (*Quran* 2/115) as a possibility to

[149] Adesoji, Abimbola O. "Between Maitatsine and Boko Haram: Islamic Fundamentalism and the Response of the Nigerian State," 100.
[150] Falola, Toyin. *Violence in Nigeria: The Crisis of Religious Politics and Secular Ideologies*. Rochester, N.Y.: Rochester Press, 1998, 142-143.
[151] Adesoji, Abimbola O. "Between Maitatsine and Boko Haram: Islamic Fundamentalism and the Response of the Nigerian State," 101.
[152] Pham, J. Peter. "In Nigeria False Prophets Are Real Problems." *World Defense Review*. 19 October 2006. [02.08.2015]. Available from: http://worlddefensereview.com/pham101906.shtml.
[153] Hiskett, Mervyn. "The Maitatsine Riots in Kano, 1980: An Assessment." *Journal of Religion in Africa*. Vol. 17, No. 3 (1987): 209.
[154] Harnischfeger, Johannes. "Boko Haram and its Muslim critics: Observations from Yobe State," 37-38.
[155] Adesoji, Abimbola O. "Between Maitatsine and Boko Haram: Islamic Fundamentalism and the Response of the Nigerian State," 103.

pray in any direction one pleases, disregarding instructions provided by the Prophet's *Sunna*. In this he challenged the authority of established Sunni *malams* who lead prayers, as freedom of direction would destroy the concept of communal prayer.[156]

The significance of Marwa's act of rejecting the Prophet as Messenger of God is evident in the fact that Yan Tatsine's other name, Yan Kala Kato,[157] was derived from it.[158] Marwa further called on his followers "to desist from mentioning the name of Prophet Mohammed whom [he] referred to as an Arab."[159] This statement demonstrates how Marwa and his followers perceived themselves as the heirs of the local heritage of the Shehu, rather than as the followers of a distant Prophet from a culture and land far from their own.

The figuring of Marwa as a prophet is one of the major signs of the deformation of the ideal of purification and reform within the Maitatsine movement, which claims to introduce true Islam but is not actually in line with Islamic orthodoxy. The spiritual leader of Izala, Abubakar Gumi described Maitatsine as a "trail of one-track minded Malams versed only in the recitation of the *Quran* by heart, and not fully comprehending what it contained."[160] Marwa did indeed condemn the reading of any book except for the *Quran*, including the *Sunna* and *hadith*, stating that "any Muslim who reads any book beside the Koran is a pagan."[161]

The *tafsīr* (Quranic exegesis) of Marwa also fell short of obeying by the rules of traditional Sunni orthodoxy. It was inspired by Sufism in its notion of *ẓāhir* (obvious meaning) and *bāṭin* (hidden meaning) of the *Quran*, giving wide scope for the development of mystical thinking and various interpretations. This *tafsīr* was the basis of Maitatsine preaching. It was culturally adjusted to local conditions which made it more appealing for a largely illiterate congregation than the classical Arabic exegesis.

The following examples will provide an insight into Marwa's peculiar *tafsīr* based on the contrast between *ẓāhir* and *bāṭin*. In the Quranic verse "*illā man tāba*" (*Quran* 19/60, 25/70 and *passim*), meaning "except for those who repent", the Arabic word "*tāba*" is given a hidden meaning based on its similarity with the Hausa expression "*tāba*", meaning tobacco. Thus, according to Maitatsine, Muslims should repent from smoking, which happened to be a habit of Hausa-speaking townsmen, abhorred by Maitatsine's followers as will be argued later on. Through this and similar *tafsīr*, Marwa strived to prove to his congregation that Hausa

[156] Hiskett, Mervyn. "The Maitatsine Riots in Kano, 1980: An Assessment," 220.
[157] The Hausa expression Kala Kato can loosely be translated as "those who say 'a mere man said it,'" referring to the Maitatsine teaching that the Prophet's sayings and deeds were of human, not divine origin.
[158] Hiskett, Mervyn. "The Maitatsine Riots in Kano, 1980: An Assessment," 219-220.
[159] Isichei, Elizabeth. "The Maitatsine Risings in Nigeria, 1980–1985: A Revolt of the Disinherited." *Journal of Religion in Africa*. Vol. 17, No. 3 (1987): 196.
[160] Isichei, Elizabeth. "The Maitatsine Risings in Nigeria, 1980–1985: A Revolt of the Disinherited," 195.
[161] Aniagolu, A. N. (Chairman). "Report of Tribunal of Inquiry on Kano Disturbances (1981)," para. 41.

townspeople did not abide by the teaching of the *Quran* and that his interpretation and example is the only genuine one.[162] Marwa's *tafsīr* also rejected the pretensions of classical Arabic/Islamic literacy associated with Hausa townspeople[163] and the Izala movement.

Except for these deviations from Sunni orthodoxy, allegations of Maitatsine members obtaining human parts for the production of charms exist[164] and the movement undoubtedly shows certain animist traits. Maitatsine's abhorrence of Western technology and its products, going as far as "preaching that anyone wearing a watch, or riding a bicycle, or driving a car, or sending his child to the normal State schools was an infidel"[165] has also no real justification in Sunni orthodoxy.

Some of the major factors in the outbreak of the uprisings of 1980 were economic deprivation and perceived social injustice, cultural, linguistic, and tribal heterogeneity, anti-intellectualism, abhorrence of secular authority, as well as social and economic adventurism. Socio-economic explanations of Maitatsine's considerable support base abound in scholarly works. They emphasise the role of the economic disruption caused by the Nigerian oil boom of the 1970s, in the wake of which bloating consumption devastated the delicate balances of traditional supply and demand in the petty mercantile-and-craft economy of the north.[166] Income inequalities became more flagrant than ever before, with most of the revenues concentrated in the hands of pre-colonial Muslim elites and mercantile oligarchy, which following independence became the heir of colonial bureaucrats and managers.[167] Marwa's preaching focused on social injustice, the abhorrence of secular authority and Western modernity, and on popular grievances in general and called for a violent and radical transformation of the society through open revolt.[168] Therefore his rhetoric appealed especially to poor uneducated youth.

Opinions on which social class most Maitatsine recruits came from vary. Most scholars, however, agree that the bulk of Mohammed Marwa's foot soldiers were recruited from the urban poor of northern Nigeria.[169] Hiskett classifies them more precisely as *yan-ci-rani*, i.e. "those who 'eat,' 'exploit' the dry season." He describes them as migrants coming from the

[162] Hiskett, Mervyn. "The Maitatsine Riots in Kano, 1980: An Assessment," 218.
[163] Hiskett, Mervyn. "The Maitatsine Riots in Kano, 1980: An Assessment," 220.
[164] Hiskett, Mervyn. "The Maitatsine Riots in Kano, 1980: An Assessment," 216-217.
[165] Aniagolu, A. N. (Chairman). "Report of Tribunal of Inquiry on Kano Disturbances (1981)," para. 141.
[166] Adesoji, Abimbola O. "Between Maitatsine and Boko Haram: Islamic Fundamentalism and the Response of the Nigerian State," 102.
[167] Hiskett, Mervyn. "The Maitatsine Riots in Kano, 1980: An Assessment," 210-211.
[168] Adesoji, Abimbola O. "Between Maitatsine and Boko Haram: Islamic Fundamentalism and the Response of the Nigerian State," 103-104.
[169] Adesoji, Abimbola O. "Between Maitatsine and Boko Haram: Islamic Fundamentalism and the Response of the Nigerian State," 103.

countryside to urban centres during the dry season, trying to make a living. They have, however, no such respected status as the so-called *almajirai*, young students of elementary Quranic schools who are similarly coming in from the rural areas and are living by crafts and begging. They are involved in petty trading but are often regarded as vagabonds and thieves. Another important distinction with the *almajirai* is that while the *almajirai* are mostly Hausa and exclusively Muslim, the *yan-ci-rani* can be from other ethnic groups and non-Muslim (animist) as well. They often come from Niger or Cameroon (as Maitatsine himself), and are less cultured in Islam, less conformist, and do not speak Hausa as their first language.[170] According to Hiskett, the indigent, opportunist, and often foreign *yan-ci-rani* were the most susceptible to Marwa's teaching because it was directed against the established Hausa Muslim society in Kano, into which the *yan-ci-rani* never became culturally integrated. They were tribal, linguistic, and cultural outcasts, and economic deprivation only intensified their alienation. Even Marwa's *tafsīr* was consistent with this anti-establishment orientation, challenging the authority of Sunni *malams* and condemning the customs of Hausa townspeople. The entertaining and anti-intellectual nature of his preaching further increased his popularity among the *yan-ci-rani* and other unemployed and often adventurist youth, and even among armed gangs.[171]

The already described *almajirai* were, on the other hand, attracted by the unorthodox preaching of Maitatsine only to a lower degree.[172] They rather formed the basis of *Tijāniyya*'s followership, while their fellows more thoroughly educated in the Quranic sciences were usually the disciples of Izala or Sufi *malams*.[173] Unlike theses disciples, *almajirai* were not frequently affiliated with the Izala, as they were little appealed by its Arabic literacy and exegesis.[174]

Another driving force behind the activities of Maitatsine was the declared struggle against the secular Nigerian state. The insurgency in Kano broke out in the aftermath of the introduction in the 1979 Nigerian federal constitution of the recognition of an individual's right to change their religion. This led to acrimony between Muslims and Christians, demonstrated by the northern Muslim representatives walking out of the constituent assembly in protest. The

[170] Hiskett, Mervyn. "The Maitatsine Riots in Kano, 1980: An Assessment," 213-214.
[171] Adesoji, Abimbola O. "Between Maitatsine and Boko Haram: Islamic Fundamentalism and the Response of the Nigerian State," 113.
[172] Hiskett, Mervyn. "The Maitatsine Riots in Kano, 1980: An Assessment," 213, 220.
[173] Hiskett, Mervyn. "The Maitatsine Riots in Kano, 1980: An Assessment," 213.
[174] Harnischfeger, Johannes. "Boko Haram and its Muslim critics: Observations from Yobe State," 45.

article was finally adopted only because the county's Christian military ruler, General Olusegun Obasanjo, pushed it through.[175]

In the case of Maitatsine, opposition to the secular state was manifested apart from assaults on police and state authorities also by attacks on everything that symbolised Western modernity, including cinemas, or vehicles. The government response to the insurgency was far from being adequate, encouraging a culture of impunity and contributing to the recurrence of violent sectarianism under the guise of religious revivalism. Unresolved national issues, including the weak economy, weak state and security apparatuses, porous borders, and the failure to define national culture and identity which would counter religious and ethnic-induced cross-border affinities contributed to this trend.

The above listed factors rendering the government and security services unable to halt religious fundamentalism were topped by a lack of political will to check fanatical sects and armed gangs. The intensity and spread of the Maitatsine crisis in Kano for instance is from a great part attributable to the rivalry between the Kano State and the federal government. The federal government provided heavy patronage to Maitatsine and then used it to portray Kano State officials as incompetent and weak.[176]

The Maitatsine movement has, similarly to the Shiites, broken away from the secular state and adopted a strict anti-West stance. It diverged from the Yan Shia, however, in its strong anti-intellectualism and its unorthodox and pragmatic teaching and objectives. Religious reformers before Maitatsine had the professed objective of purifying Islam, whether from animist traits, Sufi practices, or the influence of Western modernity, and returning to the genuine Islam of the Prophet and pious ancestors. Following this tradition, Maitatsine did assert its dedication to the purification of the Islamic religion, especially from Western influence, but it actually developed a divergent sectarian form of Islam, adjusted to local context and its followers' condition and status. It set a precedent among reformist movements in that it did not arise from the Hausa-Fulani ethnic group which emerged in northern Nigeria in the aftermath of the jihad of Usman dan Fodio. It was made up largely of foreigners and outcasts, amplifying its sectarian nature, divergence from the religious establishment, and hostility to local population.

From the Maitatsine uprisings of the 1980s, Nigeria had experienced ferocious conflicts supposedly induced by religious reformism but influenced by extraneous considerations,[177]

[175] Pham, J. Peter. "In Nigeria False Prophets Are Real Problems."
[176] Adesoji, Abimbola O. "Between Maitatsine and Boko Haram: Islamic Fundamentalism and the Response of the Nigerian State," 111-114.
[177] Adesoji, Abimbola O. "Between Maitatsine and Boko Haram: Islamic Fundamentalism and the Response of the Nigerian State," 104.

especially economic deprivation, cultural heterogeneity, exploitation by power politics, fanaticism, and adventurism. This development climaxed in the Boko Haram uprising of 2009, which shows a substantial degree of continuity with preceding radical reformist movements and builds in many respects on the precedents set by Maitatsine.

4 Boko Haram

The radical Islamist sect Boko Haram has sparked larger interest both in Nigeria and internationally than any other previous religious movement. Reasons for this enhanced attention are varied and include the demographic and ideological importance of Nigeria within western Sub-Saharan Africa, the potential of the Boko Haram crisis to have far-reaching regional consequences, as well as the increased sensitivity of the world public and political leaders to manifestations of Islamic radicalism since 9/11.[178]

The Boko Haram violence in northern Nigeria has been propelled by a dialectic of locally specific issues, concerns, and heritage on the one hand, and regional and global jihadist ideology on the other hand.[179] In this chapter, I will investigate through a historical, ideological, political, and ethno-social inquiry the impact and dynamics of these two components of the outlined dialectic.

In previous sections, the origins, development, and objectives of preceding violent religious movements were addressed. I will look at Boko Haram in the light of these movements in order to determine whether it shows some continuity with them. I will also take into consideration the influence of international jihadist movements and ideology which has become more direct than ever before in the wake of more accessible information and travels in a globalised world.[180]

4.1 Historical background

The historical roots of Boko Haram hark back to 1995, when the original founder of the sect, Abubakar Lawan, established the so-called Shabaab (Youth) group in Maiduguri, Borno State.[181] From its very beginning in the 1990s, the sect's main objective was to enforce a strict form of Sharia law in northern Nigeria.[182] Over the next 20 years, the sect has metamorphosed under various names, such as the Yusufiyya sect, the Nigerian Taliban, and lately as *Jamā'at ahl as-sunna li-'d-da'wa wa-'l-jihād* (Sunnis for Proselytization and Jihad).[183] Until 2002, when the original founder of the sect, Abubakar Lawan, left for further studies in Saudi Arabia,

[178] Pérouse de Montclos, Marc-Antoine, ed. *Boko Haram: Islamism, politics, security and the state in Nigeria*, viii.
[179] Higazi, Adam. "Mobilisation into and against Boko Haram in North-East Nigeria," 4.
[180] Pérouse de Montclos, Marc-Antoine. *Boko Haram : les enjeux régionaux de l'insurrection de Boko Haram dans le nord-est du Nigeria*, 16.
[181] Omouha, Freedom. "Boko Haram and the evolving Salafi Jihadist threat in Nigeria." In Pérouse de Montclos, Marc-Antoine, ed. *Boko Haram: Islamism, politics, security and the state in Nigeria*. Leiden: African Studies Centre, 2014, 159.
[182] Pérouse de Montclos, Marc-Antoine, ed. *Boko Haram: Islamism, politics, security and the state in Nigeria*, 2.
[183] Adesoji, Abimbola O. "Between Maitatsine and Boko Haram: Islamic Fundamentalism and the Response of the Nigerian State," 106.

the group was largely non-violent. This tendency changed when Mohammed Yusuf was appointed leader.[184]

Mohammed Yusuf was born in Yobe State, which is part of historic Borno and is predominantly Kanuri. He received classical Islamic education and did not attend secular government schools. He came from an *almajiri* background but did not succeed in obtaining full formal Quranic education. This can be seen as one of the reasons for his resentment against establish religious scholars.[185] He nevertheless became a teacher and *malam*, with a strong stance against secularism.

He was first exposed to *Salafi/Wahhabi* ideas through Izala. He was its member until 2000, yet he was barred from preaching at certain occasions because he did not possess a certificate from a university in Saudi Arabia or some other prestigious Islamic institution.[186] In the 1990s he was allegedly also affiliated with the Shiite movement under the leadership of Ibrahim El-Zakzaky, which might have contributed to his radical and anti-Western orientation.[187] It is unlikely that he was exposed to these radical influences in the traditional education system, as most Quranic schools are independent of any sect and emphasise a particular form of Islamic knowledge based on Quranic recitation and memorisation.[188]

In the period after 2002, Yusuf's preaching focused on the rejection of secularism, democracy, Western education, Westernisation, or partisan politics. It attracted unemployed youths from Yobe and Borno states, as well as from neighbouring countries such as Niger and Chad. It was around this time that the group became known as the Yusufiyya movement. In the lead-up to the 2003 general elections in Nigeria, the group became increasingly radical[189] and in 2004 Yusuf's followers attempted four attacks on the security forces. To avoid government crackdown, Yusuf fled to Saudi Arabia in 2005, but returned when he was assured by northern Nigerian politicians that he would not be harmed. He was arrested several times between 2005 and 2009, but generally avoided conflict with the government and security forces.[190]

Concurrently with these events, a small group with links to Yusuf and referring to itself as the "Nigerian Taleban," withdrew from Maiduguri to rural Kanama in Yobe State and established a remote community beyond the supervision of the secular Nigerian state. They drew a parallel between this move and the *hijra* of the Prophet, as well as the withdrawal of the

[184] Omouha, Freedom. "Boko Haram and the evolving Salafi Jihadist threat in Nigeria," 165.
[185] Pérouse de Montclos, Marc-Antoine, ed. *Boko Haram: Islamism, politics, security and the state in Nigeria*, 8.
[186] Harnischfeger, Johannes. "Boko Haram and its Muslim critics: Observations from Yobe State," 47.
[187] Adesoji, Abimbola O. "Between Maitatsine and Boko Haram: Islamic Fundamentalism and the Response of the Nigerian State," 111.
[188] Higazi, Adam. "Mobilisation into and against Boko Haram in North-East Nigeria," 32, 35.
[189] Omouha, Freedom. "Boko Haram and the evolving Salafi Jihadist threat in Nigeria," 165-166.
[190] "Boko Haram." In *The American Foreign Policy Council's World Almanac of Isalmism*. 2013, 4.

Shehu Usman dan Fodio from the *Dār al-ḥarb* represented by Gobir State to Gudu at its borders.[191] The group's name is derived from its copying of the symbols and certain operational tactics of the Afghan Taliban, there is no proof of direct link between the two groups, however. In December 2003 they carried out their first attacks on police stations and government buildings in Yobe state, expanding the territory of their hit-and-run attacks to Borno in 2004.[192] The insurrection was put down by the military and the remainder of the Kanama group regrouped around Yusuf when he returned to Maiduguri from Saudi Arabia in 2005.[193]

Although Yusuf's group, which referred to itself mostly as *da'wa*, maintained an uneasy truce with the government and security forces between 2005 and 2009, its opposition to the local Borno Izala became increasingly violent.[194] While on the ideological level, Yusuf disputed the Izala's accommodation with the secular state, actual fighting was mostly incited by contests over the right to preach in Izala mosques and over the ownership of places of worship. Yusuf's followers were arrested by state authorities on several such occasions, supposedly at the instigation of their Izala rivals.[195] Such incidents hardened the group's stance on Izala and led to skirmishes with police and security agencies.

In July 2009 a major insurrection by Yusuf's followers erupted in Bauchi, Kano, Yobe, and Borno.[196] Its origins can be traced back to the fatal shooting of members of the sect in June 2009 by police forces. The confrontation was triggered by the interception of a funeral procession made up of Yusuf's followers under the pretext of not wearing crash helmets, which was interpreted as provocation. The ensuing altercation between the sect members and security forces led to the shooting of some sect members. In response, Yusuf pledged to confront security agencies and the government, which he described as the enemies of Islam.[197]

The conflict further escalated when a military offensive was launched against the group's headquarters in Maiduguri,[198] followed by the capture of Yusuf and his extrajudicial killing in police custody.[199] Along with the group's charismatic leader, hundreds of other members were killed and arrested, which became critical for the further radicalisation of the

[191] Pérouse de Montclos, Marc-Antoine, ed. *Boko Haram: Islamism, politics, security and the state in Nigeria*, 13.
[192] Omouha, Freedom. "Boko Haram and the evolving Salafi Jihadist threat in Nigeria," 168.
[193] Higazi, Adam. "Mobilisation into and against Boko Haram in North-East Nigeria," 6.
[194] Mohammed, Kyari. "The message and methods of Boko Haram," 15.
[195] Mohammed, Kyari. "The message and methods of Boko Haram," 24.
[196] Adesoji, Abimbola O. "Between Maitatsine and Boko Haram: Islamic Fundamentalism and the Response of the Nigerian State," 106.
[197] Sani, S. "Boko Haram: History, ideas and revolt." *The Constitution.* Vol. 11, No. 4 (2011): 29.
[198] Pérouse de Montclos, Marc-Antoine, ed. *Boko Haram: Islamism, politics, security and the state in Nigeria*, viii.
[199] Higazi, Adam. "Mobilisation into and against Boko Haram in North-East Nigeria," 6.

sect.[200] Similarly to the case of the Fulani jihad, the inadequately violent response by state military forces has facilitated the transformation of Yusuf's sect from a fiery but relatively non-violent movement focusing on preaching and *da'wa* into an armed jihadist rebel group.

Following the violent crackdown in 2009, the sect was considerably re-organisation and turned into a clandestine organisation by its new and current leader, Abubakar Shekau. Since its re-emergence in 2010 under Shekau's leadership, the official name of the sect has been *Jamā'at ahl as-sunna li-'d-da'wa wa-'l-jihād* (Sunnis for Proselytization and Jihad), implying its commitment to the propagation of Islam by means of *da'wa* and to the purification of society, education, and the Islamic belief through warfare.[201] It has, however, been much more commonly referred to as Boko Haram, a combination of a Hausa and an Arabic term meaning "Western education (or civilization, in a broader sense) is forbidden (or shameful)."[202]

Boko Haram's leader, Abubakar Shekau, comes from the village of Shekau in Yobe State. Similarly to Yusuf, he belongs to the Kanuri ethnic group and has *almajiri* background, but appears less educated in the Islamic religion and less charismatic as his predecessor.[203] Under his leadership, Boko Haram gradually "adopted the tactics of global Salafi Jihadist groups, including targeted assassinations, suicide bombings, and hostage taking."[204] In a manifesto from July 2010, Shekau linked the jihad being fought by Boko Haram with jihadist efforts globally, especially that of "the soldiers of Allah in the Islamic State of Iraq," threatening attacks not only against the Nigerian state, but against "outposts of Western culture."[205]

This internationalisation of targets became evident in the August 2011 suicide bombing of the UN building in Abuja.[206] Attacks on security officials, politicians associated with the ruling All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP) in Borno, opposing *'ulamā'*, and village heads collaborating with security agents continued to prevail, however.[207] It can be concluded, that Boko Haram has under Shekau's leadership in many respects adopted the tactics, rhetoric, and image of international Salafi Jihadist organisations and attempted to imitate their internationalisation of targets. It has, however, largely retained its distinctive local organisation and geographically limited scope.[208]

[200] Omouha, Freedom. "Boko Haram and the evolving Salafi Jihadist threat in Nigeria," 169.
[201] Higazi, Adam. "Mobilisation into and against Boko Haram in North-East Nigeria," 11-12.
[202] Omouha, Freedom. "Boko Haram and the evolving Salafi Jihadist threat in Nigeria," 160.
[203] Higazi, Adam. "Mobilisation into and against Boko Haram in North-East Nigeria," 10.
[204] Pérouse de Montclos, Marc-Antoine, ed. *Boko Haram: Islamism, politics, security and the state in Nigeria*, 9.
[205] Pham, J. Peter. "Boko Haram's Evolving Threat." *Africa Security Brief*. No. 20 (2012): 4.
[206] Pérouse de Montclos, Marc-Antoine, ed. *Boko Haram: Islamism, politics, security and the state in Nigeria*, 14.
[207] Mohammed, Kyari. "The message and methods of Boko Haram," 25.
[208] Omouha, Freedom. "Boko Haram and the evolving Salafi Jihadist threat in Nigeria," 179.

It also has to be taken into consideration that Boko Haram is a multifaceted group which cannot be treated as a homogenous movement with a single set of interests and motivations. As the insurgency has been going on motivations, objectives, and targets have been shifting away from the original ideals of purifying Islam from the damaging influence of the secular state and Western civilization. Various interests, coercion, and indoctrination have also come to play a role. In this process, new fronts of fight have appeared, apart from the attack on the representatives and supporters of the secular state, the opposing *ʿulamāʾ*, and international institutions. Increasingly, schools, media, telecommunication stations, as well as Muslim civilians who do not accept Boko Haram's interpretation of Islam, or just happen to be at the wrong place at the wrong time, are being attacked.[209]

This approach has been denounced by some inside Boko Haram itself, resulting in the emergence of a splinter group upholding that it is forbidden to kill Muslims. In accordance to its standpoint, the group is called *Jamāʿat al-Ansār Muslimīn fī Bilād as-Sūdān* (commonly known as Ansaru), which translates roughly as "The Supporters of Muslims in the Land of the Blacks."[210] It was created as a "reaction to the loss of Muslim lives"[211] and arguably also due to ideological and personal differences between top leaders of Boko Haram. Unlike Boko Haram, its prime targets have been foreigners and Christians and it is more global in scope.

The areas the most severely affected by the radical Islamist violence that flared up in 2011, have been Borno State and contiguous areas of Yobe and northern Adamawa States in the north-east of Nigeria. Adam 6 Interventions by the Nigerian military have, however, done little to alleviate the anguish of local inhabitants. It has proved incapable of guaranteeing the security of citizens and unable to distinguish Boko Haram members from unarmed civilians. There have been numerous cases of army excess against civilians, alienating the military from local communities and making Boko Haram be seen by some as resistance against occupying troops.[212]

4.2 The ideology of Boko Haram: sources of inspiration, and characteristic features

Boko Haram represents on the ideological level a multifaceted group, which has gone through substantial transformation in the approximately twenty years of its existence, as has been demonstrated in the previous section. This development has been determined by a

[209] Mohammed, Kyari. "The message and methods of Boko Haram," 29.
[210] Omouha, Freedom. "Boko Haram and the evolving Salafi Jihadist threat in Nigeria," 182.
[211] Mohammed, Kyari. "The message and methods of Boko Haram," 30.
[212] Mohammed, Kyari. "The message and methods of Boko Haram," 25.

variety of factors, including inspiration from domestic and foreign Islamist groups, the political and social climate in northern Nigeria, and the government's tackling of the unfolding Boko Haram crisis.

The ideological programme of Boko Haram, especially since 2009, can be summarised as purification of the Islamic society, refusal to be governed by a secular non-Muslim government and its laws, pursuit of their replacement by Sharia, and rejection of democracy, Western education, Westernisation, and power politics as practised in Nigeria.[213] This programme reflected to some degree the strong disillusion with postcolonial Nigeria and the failure of the so-called "democrazy" since the return to civilian rule in 1999.[214]

In its response to this reality, Boko Haram has used almost exclusively religious reasoning, claiming that the imposition of its own interpretation of Islamic Law provided solution. This narrative was framed by the group's charismatic leader, Mohammed Yusuf, in the *da'wa* phase of Boko Haram's existence. It was outlined in Yusuf's sermons and only book, called *Hādzihi Aqīdatun wa Minhāj Da'watunā*.[215] The professed objective of the book was to correct the doctrine, manners, and ethics of the *umma* and to promote the practice of jihad. It addressed issues such as *da'wa*, *tawhīd*, Western education, or democracy, demonstrated as a form of *ṭāġūt* (idolatry) which cannot be adapted to Islamic legislation and rule and has to be discarded.[216] Yusuf's sermons also detailed points of religious doctrine, as well as actions permitted and prohibited within Islam. Until 2009, they were disseminated through preaching and were widely available on cassettes across the region. After the group went underground, however, diffusion had to be restricted to audio and video recordings.[217]

While the narrative established by Yusuf also contained debates on the relationship between democracy and Islam and calls for the toppling of the secular Nigerian state,[218] it would be incorrect to perceive Yusuf as a social reformer fighting against the misrule and poor governance by Nigeria's legendarily corrupt ruling elites. His criticism of the secular state and government representatives was based on religious grounds, condemning their failure to rule according to Islamic law.[219]

[213] Mohammed, Kyari. "The message and methods of Boko Haram," 14.
[214] Pérouse de Montclos, Marc-Antoine. "Boko Haram and politics: From insurgency to terrorism." In Pérouse de Montclos, Marc-Antoine, ed. *Boko Haram: Islamism, politics, security and the state in Nigeria*. Leiden: African Studies Centre, 2014, 145.
[215] Mohammed, Kyari. "The message and methods of Boko Haram," 14.
[216] Higazi, Adam. "Mobilisation into and against Boko Haram in North-East Nigeria," 15.
[217] Higazi, Adam. "Mobilisation into and against Boko Haram in North-East Nigeria," 17.
[218] Omouha, Freedom. "Boko Haram and the evolving Salafi Jihadist threat in Nigeria," 177.
[219] Crisis Group. "Northern Nigeria: Background to conflict." *Africa Report*. No. 168. 20 December 2010, 38.

Another important feature in Yusuf's preaching was avenging his followers' injuries. This motive of retaliation became especially strong after the June 2009 confrontation between Boko Haram members and police forces. It was, however, never explicitly extended in Yusuf's discourse to avenging the grievances of Nigerian citizens abused by security forces and poor governance.[220]

The main components of Boko Haram's ideology having been addressed, I will now turn to the analysis of their possible origin. I will compare some of the characteristic elements of Boko Haram's discourse with preceding Islamist movements described in this thesis. Finally, I will address the issues of Islamic law and Western education separately, as they are the focal points of Boko Haram's ideology and discourse.

4.2.1 Continuity with preceding local Islamist movements

Boko Haram preachers have often made historical references to the Fulani jihad of the Shehu Usman dan Fodio and his Sokoto Caliphate, which are held up as models of successful jihad Islamic state-building in the region. These references are made in spite of the fact that the Fulani led jihad also against the old Islamic kingdom of Borno, home of the Borno Kanuri who make up the majority of Boko Haram.[221] Going even further, Boko Haram has claimed to have taken up the Shehu's true tradition, as opposed to traditional religious leaders such as the Sultan of Sokoto, who is a direct descendant of Usman dan Fodio. Boko Haram leaders have presented themselves as true heirs of Nigeria's pre-colonial Islam by calling on all Muslims to "fight for the restoration of the Caliphate of Usman Danfodio which the white man fought and fragmented."[222] Contrastingly, they see the Sultan of Sokoto and other traditional leaders as traitors who have put the Nigerian Constitution ahead of Quranic teachings.[223]

Boko Haram resorted to the Shehu's teaching also in finding justification for its frequent use of *takfīr* (a Muslim declaring another Muslim as *kāfir* (apostate), thus excommunicating him from the *umma*) and for its killing of fellow Muslims. During the Fulani jihad, the Shehu justified his attack on the Islamic Sultanate of Bornu on the grounds that it had sided with the enemies of Islam and resisted the Shehu's jihad and the Islamic cause it represented.[224]

[220] Harnischfeger, Johannes. "Boko Haram and its Muslim critics: Observations from Yobe State," 36.
[221] Higazi, Adam. "Mobilisation into and against Boko Haram in North-East Nigeria," 27.
[222] "Boko Haram says no more talks with FG." *Daily Trust*. 22 March 2012. [05.08.2015]. Available from: http://www.latestnigeriannews.com/news/189601/boko-haram-says-no-more-talks-with-fg.html.
[223] Harnischfeger, Johannes. "Boko Haram and its Muslim critics: Observations from Yobe State," 50-51.
[224] Higazi, Adam. "Mobilisation into and against Boko Haram in North-East Nigeria," 22.

Correspondingly, Muslims non-compliant with Boko Haram's interpretation of Islam were labelled as infidels and have thus become legitimate targets of attack.[225]

Boko Haram has, however, been highly selective with regards to the Shehu's legacy. Some of his more moderate doctrinal positions, as well as his emphasis on education and intellectual scholarly work are absent in Boko Haram preaching. The anti-intellectualism of Boko Haram is well demonstrated by the fact that the group's spiritual leader, Mohammed Yusuf wrote one sole book on his religious ideas during his lifetime, while the Shehu produced a number of works discussing Islamic doctrine and also wrote poems and other scholarly literature. The vast disparity between the Shehu's and Yusuf's mastery of the Islamic sciences is evident in the elementary mistakes Yusuf makes in the referencing of Quranic Suras he quotes.[226]

The three major radical Islamist currents on the 20th century in northern Nigeria, i.e. the Izala, the Shiites, and the Maitatsine, have understandably inspired Boko Haram's ideology to an even larger degree. Boko Haram can to a certain extent be perceived as a blend of Izala's endeavour to purify Nigerian Islam, the Shiite's call for an Islamic state based on strict adherence to the Sharia and absent from the adverse influence of Western civilization, and Maitatsine's sectarianism and non-conformist stance.

Mohammed Yusuf was certainly strongly affected by the Salafi doctrine of the Izala movement, hostile against the unorthodox practices infused into Nigerian Islam by the Sufi brotherhoods.[227] Like Izala, he condemned the Islam of the brotherhoods but mostly spared the *Qādiriyya* from his criticism, for it had been connected with Usman dan Fodio. Both Izala and Boko Haram condemned the corruption of traditional elders and emirs and criticised as collaborators with the secular regime.[228] Boko Haram went as far as carrying out assassination attempts at traditional rulers, for instance the Shehu of Borno.[229]

Another point of agreement between the Salafist Izala and Boko Haram is the emphasis on the scrupulous following of God's laws as revealed in the *Quran* and the *Sunna*. Yet, while Izala intended to establish Sharia legislation in northern Nigeria by taking over the state apparatus, Boko Haram preferred to violently confront it. In this respect, it is rather the means than the ends that distinguish Izala from Boko Haram.[230]

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[225] Omouha, Freedom. "Boko Haram and the evolving Salafi Jihadist threat in Nigeria," 160.
[226] Higazi, Adam. "Mobilisation into and against Boko Haram in North-East Nigeria," 15.
[227] Pérouse de Montclos, Marc-Antoine. "Boko Haram and politics: From insurgency to terrorism," 138.
[228] Pérouse de Montclos, Marc-Antoine. *Boko Haram : les enjeux régionaux de l'insurrection de Boko Haram dans le nord-est du Nigeria*, 7.
[229] Higazi, Adam. "Mobilisation into and against Boko Haram in North-East Nigeria," 19.
[230] Harnischfeger, Johannes. "Boko Haram and its Muslim critics: Observations from Yobe State," 38.

The principal dispute between Izala and Boko Haram, which has also been one of the main reasons of their several violent clashes, concerns their distinct standpoint on living in a secular state. Izala assumed that transforming Nigeria into an Islamic state was not attainable, given the realities of the country, thus it was more effective to become involved in the running of the secular state and bring about some changes from inside. For this reason, Izala clerics cherished close ties with northern politicians and numerous Izala members belonged to the ranks of the state administration. To the contrary, Yusuf did not accept the secular state as a temporary necessity. He maintained that it could be toppled through jihad and that Nigeria's Muslims should stop collaborating with it.[231] Boko Haram adopted a very strong stance against government service as well, especially in the areas of judiciary and law enforcement.[232] As a government not based on Sharia was deemed illegal, serving such a government was illegitimate as well, amounting, according to Yusuf, to unbelief. This statement became another source of polemic and confrontation with the Yan Izala. Izala faced difficulties in refuting Boko Haram's standpoint among potential recruits, due to the widespread disenchantment of the population with the government. Its intellectual reasoning went often unnoticed against the appeal of Boko Haram's call for toppling the corrupt government and ruling system.[233]

Boko Haram has on the whole been little engaged in learned polemics on Islamic tenets – they were more characteristic of the conflict between Izala and the Sufi brotherhoods. The only major debate ensued upon Izala's labelling Boko Haram as "*Kharijites*,"[234] effectively designating them as a separate sect outside the Islamic community. This was possibly one of the main reasons for Yusuf's writing *Hādzihi Aqīdatun wa Minhāj Da'watunā*.[235] In comparison with Izala, however, it can be concluded that in the case of Boko Haram actions have received a much higher significance than words.

The ideology of the Shiite movement appears close to that of Boko Haram in that it has consistently rejected the secular Nigerian constitution and openly advocated the establishment of a pure Islamic state based on the Sharia. Its anti-Western orientation has probably been a major source of inspiration for Boko Haram as well. Analogously to Izala, however, the Shiite movement has not advocated armed struggle against the secular state – it is once again means

[231] Harnischfeger, Johannes. "Boko Haram and its Muslim critics: Observations from Yobe State," 47, 57.
[232] Pérouse de Montclos, Marc-Antoine. "Boko Haram and politics: From insurgency to terrorism," 145.
[233] Mohammed, Kyari. "The message and methods of Boko Haram," 16, 19.
[234] In reference to the isolated rebel group in early Islamic history which repudiated obedience to ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib and developed tenets which are in discord with both the Sunni and Shia orthodoxy.
Kropáček, Luboš. *Duchovní cesty islámu*, 178.
[235] Higazi, Adam. "Mobilisation into and against Boko Haram in North-East Nigeria," 21.

rather than ends that differentiate it from Boko Haram, with ideological distinctions between the two practically negligible.[236]

It is also worth mentioning that while the Shiites place great emphasis on social justice[237] and the establishment of educational institutions,[238] Boko Haram is barely concerned with social issues.

The Boko Haram uprising is in several ways reminiscent of the Maitatsine revolt as well, which occurred in almost the same area slightly more than a decade earlier. Both insurrections have been sectarian in their nature, promoting fundamentalist minority beliefs and waging a war on the Nigerian state.[239] Both movements have used violence as a means to achieve their objectives and have targeted not only representatives of the secular state administration and security forces but significantly also civilians.

Another parallel can be discerned when comparing the spiritual leaders of the two sects. Both were killed by security forces resulting in the increased radicalisation of their followers and in the transformation of both sects into clandestine organisations. Both leaders have also often been accused of hypocrisy by their adversaries. Marwa faced accusations of using amulets and of being engaged in other un-Islamic practices despite his call for strict application of the Sharia.[240] Yusuf was, on the other hand, criticised for enjoying Western luxuries while at the same time preaching a simple, ascetic form of life for his followers.[241]

Similarly to Maitatsine, it is suspected that fetishism is practised in the ranks of Boko Haram, with militants using amulets to protect themselves from attacks and upholding syncretic ideas.[242] This demonstrates that while Boko Haram is often portrayed as a Salafi jihadist of *Wahhabi* movement, many of its adherents do not at all fit into these currents.[243] Given the fanaticism of many of the sects' members, to exercise violence has in some cases become an end in itself.

Both Marwa and Yusuf rejected Western civilization in their preaching. Their approach to Western modernity and its technological inventions was, however, somewhat different. Marwa forbade his followers even to ride a bicycle, while Yusuf's position was clearly more

[236] Hickey, Raymond. "The 1982 Uprisings in Nigeria: A Note." *African Affairs*. Vol. 83, No. 331 (1984): 252, 254.
[237] Pérouse de Montclos, Marc-Antoine. "Boko Haram and politics: From insurgency to terrorism," 145.
[238] "Madrasa." *Official website of the Islamic Movement in Nigeria*.
[239] Adesoji, Abimbola O. "Between Maitatsine and Boko Haram: Islamic Fundamentalism and the Response of the Nigerian State," 108.
[240] Adesoji, Abimbola O. "Between Maitatsine and Boko Haram: Islamic Fundamentalism and the Response of the Nigerian State," 108.
[241] Omouha, Freedom. "Boko Haram and the evolving Salafi Jihadist threat in Nigeria," 168.
[242] Pérouse de Montclos, Marc-Antoine. *Boko Haram : les enjeux régionaux de l'insurrection de Boko Haram dans le nord-est du Nigeria*, 14.
[243] Higazi, Adam. "Mobilisation into and against Boko Haram in North-East Nigeria," 41.

flexible.[244] He adopted a rather pragmatic and opportunist attitude to the utilization of the achievements of Western modernity and it is important to note that early on in his career he even served in some governmental bodies.

Yusuf can be distinguished from Marwa also in his insistence on his comprehensive knowledge of the *Quran* and the *Sunna* and on the authenticity of his call for jihad based on these texts. Unlike Marwa, he did not proclaim himself prophet, he abrogated un-Islamic rituals, and styled himself as custodian of Islamic orthodoxy, making it difficult for his critics to dismiss his teachings as heterodox. He also copied the rhetoric and image of transnational jihadists – a possibility Maitatsine did not have in 1980.[245]

This comparison has demonstrated how important domestic heritage was in the development of Boko Haram. It further emphasises another common feature in most radical Islamist movements in northern Nigeria – that of the extreme importance of individual charismatic leadership.

4.2.2 Inspiration from global radical Islamist currents

Apart from its ideological connection to domestic Islamist movements, Boko Haram has undoubtable links to global Salafi jihadist ideology. Salafi jihadism is a merger of the Salafi strive for a return to the Islam of the "pious ancestors," that is Mohammed and the early Islamic community, with a jihadist call to violence to bring about such radical change and to purge Islam of outside influences. It is a transnational ideological flow hostile to Western modernity and associated with terrorist tactics.[246]

The global context of the upsurge of Salafi jihadist ideology in the late 20th century has been significant in the development of Boko Haram. While under the leadership of Mohammed Yusuf the group was rather isolated within Nigeria, he made copious references in his teaching and book to Aḥmad Ibn Taymīya,[247] one of the Islamic scholars most often cited by Salafi jihadists, who virulently condemned Shia, Sufis, and the ruling Sunni elite of his time. He even named his movement's main mosque and headquarters after him signalling "his hostility to the ruling Muslim elite as well as to traditional Nigerian Islam"[248] interwoven with Sufi practices.

Yusuf's successor, Abubakar Shekau, lacks his predecessor's eloquence and is less acquainted to religious doctrines. Therefore, he has taken even greater care to underscore his

[244] Pérouse de Montclos, Marc-Antoine. "Boko Haram and politics: From insurgency to terrorism," 142.
[245] Harnischfeger, Johannes. "Boko Haram and its Muslim critics: Observations from Yobe State," 46.
[246] Omouha, Freedom. "Boko Haram and the evolving Salafi Jihadist threat in Nigeria," 177.
[247] Mohammed, Kyari. "The message and methods of Boko Haram," 14.
[248] Tanchum, M. "Al-Qa'ida's West African advance: Nigeria's Boko Haram, Mali's Touareg, and the spread of Salafi Jihadism", *Israel Journal of Foreign Affairs.* Vol. 6, No. 2 (2012): 79.

movement's Salafi jihadist orientation. In March 2010 it claimed to have joined ranks with Al-Qaeda[249] while five years later it pledged allegiance to the Islamic State.[250] Joining, at least in word, these international jihadist organisations has provided Boko Haram and its leader with a doctrinal and discursive reference point, as well as an organisational model, culture of self-sacrifice and authority. Boko Haram's adoption of the style, outward appearance, and rhetoric, including audio-visual content, of international jihadist organisations has also proved to be a powerful propaganda tool.[251] Yet, direct contact or actual tactical coordination between Boko Haram and Al-Qaeda is disputed and there is no evidence of external financing of the group – it relies on domestic funding and especially on cash from looting and hostage taking.[252]

While at first sight the international dimension acquired by Boko Haram under Shekau's leadership may seem to be divergent from other religious movements in northern Nigeria, it is actually nothing new. The Sufi brotherhoods had a foreign origin; the Shehu borrowed many of his ideas from the Maghrebi scholar, al-Maghīlī; Izala was inspired by Saudi models; the Shiites looked at Iran; and the leader of the Maitatsine, Muhammad Marwa, hailed from Cameroon.[253] Boko Haram under Shekau has thus only further extended this practice, given the possibilities offered by modern media, telecommunication technologies, and transportation.[254]

4.2.3 Western education

Boko Haram's position on Western education deserves special attention, as the group's hostility towards it has become its "trademark" over the course of the years. As a part of its strategy to wipe out un-Islamic education from northern Nigeria, Boko Haram has on several occasions targeted state-run education institutions,[255] generating huge media attention not only in Nigeria but internationally.

Resentment towards *boko*, i.e. Western education, dates back to early colonial times and arose from its close association with the colonial state and Christian missionaries. In the framework of the British colonial policy of indirect rule, the Muslim community of today's northern Nigeria was administered through indigenous institutions[256] and elites who received Western education to be able to fulfil their administrative duties. Thanks to their new education,

[249] Omouha, Freedom. "Boko Haram and the evolving Salafi Jihadist threat in Nigeria," 178.
[250] "Islamic State 'accepts' Boko Haram's allegiance pledge." *BBC*. 13 March 2015. [06.08.2015]. Available from: http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-31862992.
[251] Higazi, Adam. "Mobilisation into and against Boko Haram in North-East Nigeria," 8.
[252] Pérouse de Montclos, Marc-Antoine. "Boko Haram and politics: From insurgency to terrorism," 141.
[253] Pérouse de Montclos, Marc-Antoine. "Boko Haram and politics: From insurgency to terrorism," 142.
[254] Pérouse de Montclos, Marc-Antoine. *Boko Haram : les enjeux régionaux de l'insurrection de Boko Haram dans le nord-est du Nigeria*, 16.
[255] Higazi, Adam. "Mobilisation into and against Boko Haram in North-East Nigeria," 29.
[256] Mohammed, Kyari. "The message and methods of Boko Haram," 22.

this limited cadre of elite assumed higher positions than their peers with Quranic education, instigating animosity and distrust between traditionally educated and Western-educated elite in northern Nigeria.[257] Mohammed Yusuf simply resurrected this historical narrative and adjusted it to his own time and society. Forty years after gaining independence, Western education was in northern Nigeria still needed almost exclusively for government jobs which were not widely available and plagued by corruption. In his preaching, Yusuf claimed that it infected the Islamic civilisation and community and that it served as a tool in the hands of corrupt elites.[258]

Despite their enmity towards Western civilization, Yusuf and his successor Shekau were not anti-modernists like the Maitatsine leader, Muhammadu Marwa. He abhorred everything Western, including Western technology and its products,[259] while Boko Haram adopted a more pragmatic standpoint – it despised the influence of Western civilization but made use of Western technology.[260]

Izala representatives accused Boko Haram of spreading the misconception that Islam and modern sciences are incompatible. Yusuf, however, declared that science and technology developed in the West should be utilised by Muslims unless it is in discord with the teachings of the Prophet.[261]

Izala clerics generally agreed with Boko Haram in that Western education had been polluted by ungodly ideas but as they "lacked the power to purge the school curricula, they grudgingly accepted secular education because it was indispensable to enhance their influence in the state apparatus."[262] This pragmatic approach appealed mainly to Western-educated Muslims who were resentful towards the secular state and its corrupt ruling elites but were forced to live off it.[263] Boko Haram's criticism has been directed precisely at this class of Muslim elites, called *'yan boko*. According to Boko Haram, as they formed a part of the un-Islamic system of government and politics in northern Nigeria, they ceased to be real Muslims. Considering the widespread disenchantment with government representatives and Muslim politicians who belonged mostly to the *'yan boko*, it was rather easy for Boko Haram to "argue that the *'yan boko* were apostates and that the secular system should be replaced with an Islamic one."[264]

[257] Mohammed, Kyari. "The message and methods of Boko Haram," 11.
[258] Harnischfeger, Johannes. "Boko Haram and its Muslim critics: Observations from Yobe State," 52-53.
[259] Falola, Toyin. *Violence in Nigeria: The Crisis of Religious Politics and Secular Ideologies,* 142-143.
[260] Adesoji, Abimbola O. "Between Maitatsine and Boko Haram: Islamic Fundamentalism and the Response of the Nigerian State," 101.
[261] Harnischfeger, Johannes. "Boko Haram and its Muslim critics: Observations from Yobe State," 52.
[262] Harnischfeger, Johannes. "Boko Haram and its Muslim critics: Observations from Yobe State," 52.
[263] Harnischfeger, Johannes. "Boko Haram and its Muslim critics: Observations from Yobe State," 47.
[264] Higazi, Adam. "Mobilisation into and against Boko Haram in North-East Nigeria," 11.

4.2.4 Application of *Sharia*

Another core demand of Boko Haram apart from the abolishment of Western education has since its beginnings been the rigorous adherence to Islamic law. In Boko Haram's view, this claim was incompatible with secular government, which would have been unable to apply Islamic law correctly and would have placed under the supremacy of a constitution written by men.[265]

While by far not all Nigerian Muslims shared Boko Haram's position against the secular state, the group's call for stricter implementation of *Sharia* fell on fertile ground in the historical context of the so-called *Sharia* debate in Nigeria. Upon the end of military dictatorship and return to civil rule in 1999, Islamic legislation was extended to the penal domain in the north-western state of Zamfara.[266] Since 2000, *Sharia* penal codes have been adopted by eleven other northern Nigerian states.[267] Islamic legislation was extended in northern states in the first place to appease a section of the Muslim population which had consistently agitated against the secularity of the country. Political officeholders saw them as a threat to their position and simultaneously as a potential support base for which reason they yielded to their demands.[268] The new legal measures, however, failed to bring about more social justice or any substantial reform of the society and government which was blamed at the insufficient application of the *Sharia*, rather than on the failure of the political project of Islamists.[269] This resulted in ever stronger insistence on the meticulous application of Sharia, fuelled largely by Boko Haram rhetoric.

4.3 The position of Boko Haram in northern Nigerian power politics

Previous sections have shown that the majority of Boko Haram's activities have been related to the matter of religion. Similarly to preceding Islamist movements, however, it influenced and was affected by the domain of politics.

Boko Haram cannot be regarded as a political party, nor as a charity network. It has no political programme, its members did not attempt to contest elections, and its leaders did never expressed in a clear proposal how they would reform and govern Nigeria according to the Islamic law. It can still be perceived political, for several reasons. First, it challenges the

[265] Pérouse de Montclos, Marc-Antoine. "Boko Haram and politics: From insurgency to terrorism," 145.
[266] Harnischfeger, Johannes. "Boko Haram and its Muslim critics: Observations from Yobe State," 57.
[267] Mohammed, Kyari. "The message and methods of Boko Haram," 22.
[268] Adesoji, Abimbola O. "Between Maitatsine and Boko Haram: Islamic Fundamentalism and the Response of the Nigerian State," 110.
[269] Pérouse de Montclos, Marc-Antoine. *Boko Haram : les enjeux régionaux de l'insurrection de Boko Haram dans le nord-est du Nigeria*, 11.

secularity of the Nigerian state, reveals the corruption of predatory ruling elites, and contests Western political values and systems of governance. Second, it is principally attacking political targets, such as police stations, prisons, government schools, or mosques affiliated with ruling elites. Finally, it has some social support locally and influences Nigerian politics, either through direct involvement in the local political power play or through coercive influence.[270]

In Nigeria, religion and politics are closely intertwined. Seemingly theological disputes often reflect social and political interests and divisions, for instance between illiterate and Western-educated Nigerians. For this reason, political elites have routinely co-opted religious authorities and exploited religiously grounded insurgencies to their own benefit.[271] Consequently, many imams, especially from Izala's ranks, have an ambivalent relationship towards the political establishment – criticising them but at the same time collaborating with them. Even Mohammed Yusuf, the founder of Boko Haram, was early in his career close to the Borno State authorities whom he later condemned for their corruption. In 2001, he was appointed board member of the Borno State Sharia Law Implementation Committee.[272] His closeness with state authorities was at the time encouraged by the general climate of the introduction of Sharia penal codes in some northern states. Ruling and aspiring politicians who promised their voters to implement Islamic legislation more strictly, looked for support from radical Islamist groups in exchange for political patronage.[273]

Thanks to its expanding followership in the early 2000s, Boko Haram became very attractive to Borno State politicians in the build-up to the 2003 general elections. The Borno State Governor, Ali Modu Sheriff, pledged to implement Sharia more strictly if elected and promised Boko Haram financial support and political positions in reward for their backing.[274] After being elected, Sheriff created the post of the minister of religious affairs and bestowed it on one of Yusuf's close associates it in return for the support Boko Haram gangs had rendered him during the election campaign.[275] As the extension of Islamic legislation in Borno did not bring about much anticipated social change. Frustration was especially high among unemployed youths who had been recruited into armed gangs used by politicians for electoral

[270] Pérouse de Montclos, Marc-Antoine. "Boko Haram and politics: From insurgency to terrorism," 135-137.
[271] Pérouse de Montclos, Marc-Antoine, ed. *Boko Haram: Islamism, politics, security and the state in Nigeria*, ix.
[272] Modu Sheriff, Ali. "My Boko Haram Story, by Ali Modu Sherrif, ex Borno Gov." *Vanguard*. 3 September 2014. [08.08.2015]. Available from: http://www.vanguardngr.com/2014/09/boko-haram-story-ali-modu-sherrif-ex-borno-gov/#sthash.pEqTWOvi.dpuf.
[273] Adesoji, Abimbola O. "Between Maitatsine and Boko Haram: Islamic Fundamentalism and the Response of the Nigerian State," 107.
[274] Omouha, Freedom. "Boko Haram and the evolving Salafi Jihadist threat in Nigeria," 166.
[275] Harnischfeger, Johannes. "Boko Haram and its Muslim critics: Observations from Yobe State," 40.

violence. Due to their disillusionment, they became particularly susceptible to the radical brand of Islam preached by Yusuf.[276]

As the relationship between Yusuf and state authorities deteriorated, he became more vocal in his preaching against the government, as well as local Izala *ʿulamāʾ* cooperating with the state administration. Yusuf had on several occasions branded the government of Ali Modu Sheriff as *ṭāġūt* and condemned its corruption and excesses as un-Islamic.[277] Despite the intensification of Yusuf's anti-government preaching, he still retained some of his political patrons who even bailed him out when he was detained in Abuja in 2009. On his return to his movement's base in Maiduguri, he received a triumphant welcome with streets lined with exotic cars, despite Yusuf's professed disdain for Western luxuries.[278]

Since the extrajudicial killing of Yusuf by Nigerian police forces, Boko Haram practically cut off its relations with political elites and local officials. The Boko Haram insurgency has, however, continued to shape the course of Nigerian politics. Northern elites have used the crisis to slam the federal government as incompetence in its response to Boko Haram violence in the north.[279] Most conspiracy theories on the political patronage of Boko Haram do not hold, however. For instance the popular scheme that northern Muslim leaders sponsor the sect themselves to showcase the incapability of the Christian administration to tackle the Boko Haram issue stands in contradiction to the fact that the then Muslim presidential candidate Muhammad Buhari only narrowly escaped a Boko Haram suicide bombing in 2014.[280] Today there is no evidence of Boko Haram being sponsored by high level politicians. Similarly, it is no longer used to manipulate elections, as it has become too unpredictable and politically toxic.[281] Yet, it continues to strongly affect Nigerian politics as has been demonstrated by the recent victory of Buhari in the Nigerian presidential elections.[282]

4.4 The societal support base and recruitment pattern of Boko Haram

Finally, as in the case of already discussed radical Islamist movements, the societal support base, and recruitment pattern of Boko Haram will be put under scrutiny. The spread of the radical Islamist ideology preached by Boko Haram in north-eastern Nigeria is attributable to both external and internal factors. The external influence of the worldwide resurgence of

[276] Omouha, Freedom. "Boko Haram and the evolving Salafi Jihadist threat in Nigeria," 166-167.
[277] Mohammed, Kyari. "The message and methods of Boko Haram," 18.
[278] Harnischfeger, Johannes. "Boko Haram and its Muslim critics: Observations from Yobe State," 39.
[279] Higazi, Adam. "Mobilisation into and against Boko Haram in North-East Nigeria," 19.
[280] Higazi, Adam. "Mobilisation into and against Boko Haram in North-East Nigeria," 24.
[281] Pérouse de Montclos, Marc-Antoine. "Boko Haram and politics: From insurgency to terrorism," 149.
[282] "Nigeria elections: Winner Buhari issues Boko Haram vow." *BBC*. 1 April 2015. [08.08.2015]. Available from: http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-32150234.

radical Islam and the internationalisation of jihadist rhetoric has already been addressed when discussing Boko Haram's ideology. Internal factors crucial for the spread of radical Islamism in northern Nigeria are primarily the economic problems of urban and rural destitution, state mismanagement, as well as the brutal military assault on Boko Haram, which had, however, at least as severely affected local civilian population.

When analysing the societal support base of Boko Haram, it is interesting to look at its ethnic composition. Both the late Boko Haram founder, Mohammed Yusuf, and current movement leader, Abubakar Shekau, are ethnic Kanuri. Kanuri people, who add up to about 5 million today, inhabit mainly the area of the 19th-century Borno Empire, which is now made up of Borno and Yobe states in north-eastern Nigeria, northern Cameroon, south-western Chad and south-eastern Niger. This territory used to match the operational zone of Boko Haram[283] before it was pushed out from most of these areas by a military crackdown from the Nigerian, Chadian, Cameroonian, and Nigerien armies.[284] However, Boko Haram itself cannot be accurately described as a Kanuri project as many of its victims have been Kanuri. It inflicted a large number of Kanuri civilian casualties also indirectly, as the assault of the Nigerian Army directed against Boko Haram has often been the cause of civilian deaths. The Shehu of Borno, the traditional religious leader of the Kanuri, has also rejected the sect and has himself been targeted by Boko Haram radicals.[285]

While the evocation of ethnic or class sentiment is lacking in Boko Haram discourse, Kanuri youths are estimated to comprise 70-80 % of Boko Haram.[286] The reason for this is most probably that the Kanuri leadership of Boko Haram comes into close contact most frequently with their kinsmen to whom they are linked with family ties. Even though young recruits, who refer to themselves as *'yan uwa* (Hausa for "Brotherhood"), sometimes cut their ties with biological kin who do not join them, it is much more common that they seek to recruit their family members.[287] Owing to the extremely porous borders between north-eastern Nigeria and adjacent countries with Kanuri populations, foreigners with kinship ties to Boko Haram fighters can easily enlist in the group.[288] Refuge and supply-lines extend to neighbouring Kanuri

[283] McGregor, Andrew. "Alleged Connection between Boko Haram and Nigeria's Fulani Herdsmen Could Spark a Nigerian Civil War." *TerrorismMonitor*. Vol XII, Issue 10 (2014): 9.
[284] Onuah, Felix. "Nigeria says has pushed Boko Haram out of all but three areas." *Reuters*. 17 March 2015. [10.08.2015]. Available from: http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/03/17/us-nigeria-violence-idUSKBN0MD26020150317.
[285] McGregor, Andrew. "Alleged Connection between Boko Haram and Nigeria's Fulani Herdsmen Could Spark a Nigerian Civil War," 9.
[286] Higazi, Adam. "Mobilisation into and against Boko Haram in North-East Nigeria," 26.
[287] Higazi, Adam. "Mobilisation into and against Boko Haram in North-East Nigeria," 12.
[288] Adesoji, Abimbola O. "Between Maitatsine and Boko Haram: Islamic Fundamentalism and the Response of the Nigerian State," 99.

communities as well.[289] The founder of Boko Haram, Mohammed Yusuf, himself hailed from southern Niger, which has, however, been linked more to Maiduguri than the Nigerien capital of Niamey, both economically and religiously. Analogously, the commander of the 2011 Boko Haram assault against the UN office in Abuja, Maman Nur, came from northern Cameroon, which has historically been strongly influenced by the Kanuri of Borno.[290]

Another group susceptible to Boko Haram propaganda apart from the Kanuri is the more recently Islamized population of the hinterland of Borno. This area was not Islamized until the mid-20th century and in some parts African traditional religions still persists. Recent conversion to Islam, however, does not stand in straightforward correlation with Boko Haram membership.[291] The principal reason for joining Boko Haram both among the Kanuri and recent converts can rather be found in economic and social exclusion.

Socio-economic conditions have been deteriorating in northern Nigeria since the 1980s. Mass poverty and unemployment, corruption, mismanagement of resources, and display of wealth by ruling elites have all contributed to growing frustration among people.[292] In this context, Yusuf appeared to be defending the interests of those excluded from growth through the promotion of a strict application of Sharia which would bring about social justice.[293]

The section of the population seemingly most susceptible to expressing its anger and frustration in religious term has been unemployed urban youth. With mounting economic and demographic pressures in northern Nigeria and adjacent areas, youthful population has been flocking to urban centres in large numbers. Seeking to escape rural destitution, or forced by abject poverty and orphanhood, children and young men have increasingly taken up the ancient Islamic practice of moving into cities to acquire Islamic education.[294] Many of these *almajirai*, however, live in appalling conditions making them vulnerable to financial influences, exploitation and extremist religious propaganda. According to a study conducted by the Ministerial Committee on Almajiri Education, there were 9.5 million *almajirai* in Nigeria in 2010.[295] Following the old tradition, their education has consisted mostly of *Quran*

[289] McGregor, Andrew. "Alleged Connection between Boko Haram and Nigeria's Fulani Herdsmen Could Spark a Nigerian Civil War," 9.
[290] Pérouse de Montclos, Marc-Antoine. *Boko Haram : les enjeux régionaux de l'insurrection de Boko Haram dans le nord-est du Nigeria*, 2-3.
[291] Higazi, Adam. "Mobilisation into and against Boko Haram in North-East Nigeria," 26.
[292] Adesoji, Abimbola O. "Between Maitatsine and Boko Haram: Islamic Fundamentalism and the Response of the Nigerian State," 106.
[293] Pérouse de Montclos, Marc-Antoine. *Boko Haram : les enjeux régionaux de l'insurrection de Boko Haram dans le nord-est du Nigeria*, 10.
[294] Mohammed, Kyari. "The message and methods of Boko Haram," 23.
[295] Adetayo, Olalekan and Alechenu, John. "Growing Almajiri population dangerous to national devt – Jonathan." *Punch Nigeria*. 11 April 2012. [11.08.2015]. Available from: http://www.punchng.com/news/growing-almajiri-population-dangerous-to-national-devt-jonathan/.

memorization, with no government oversight of curriculums.[296] Contrarily to the era before the 1980s, however, the traditional structure of society which used to patronize the *almajirai* did not exist anymore. It largely disappeared with the post-independence processes of social and economic change, and especially in the aftermath of the oil boom and the rise of Izala in the 1970s.[297] The gradual breakdown of the traditional balance of supply and demand in the northern economy, as well as the collapse of the traditional system of society and education have foreshadowed uprisings such as Maitatsine or Boko Haram.

The decreasing quality and recognition of traditional Quranic education, coupled by the overall lack of schooling institutions, indicates the collapse of the educational system in northern Nigeria. Attendance of government schools is significantly lower in the North than in the South[298] and illiteracy is especially high in Borno and north-eastern Nigeria – almost half of children never attend primary school with more than a third not having Quranic education either.[299]

While those having some *almajiri* education used to stick to the teachings of the two main Sufi brotherhoods, the *Qādiriyya* and *Tijāniyya*, they are also attracted by Boko Haram preaching, along with youth without education. The reasons of Boko Haram's appeal among youth and the drivers of their radicalisation are chiefly psycho-social. By claiming that Western education is corrupt and materialist, Boko Haram gives dignity to young men without literacy.[300] By admitting them into a "brotherhood in faith," the sect endows them with bonds to fellow fighters in the jihad.[301]

Boko Haram is of course not made up entirely of young people with little education. Its membership cuts across a broad spectrum of society, with some educated and wealthy recruits convinced by Boko Haram's ideology of overthrowing the secular system and propagating Islamic law.[302] Others have joined in hope of material gain, or vengeance. Apart from these rationally based motives for mobilisation, however, there are a number of others which are more

[296] Awofeso, N., Ritchie, J. and Degeling, P. "The Almajiri heritage and the threat of nonstate terrorism in Northern Nigeria: Lessons from Central Asia and Pakistan", *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism.* Vol. 26, No. 4 (2003): 314.
[297] Back, Irit. "From the Colony to the Post-Colony: Sufis and Wahhâbîsts in Senegal and Nigeria," 430.
[298] According to a 2010 USAID survey, the proportion of children age 6-11 in primary school in north-western and north-eastern Nigeria is around 41 %, while equivalent figures for the south are close to 80 %. Enrolment in secondary schools was around 23 % in the north, compared with an average of about 60% in the south. National Population Commission (Nigeria) and RTI International. *Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) EdData Survey 2010: Education Data for Decision-Making.* Washington, DC: National Population Commission and RTI International, 2011, 55, 59.
[299] Pérouse de Montclos, Marc-Antoine. *Boko Haram : les enjeux régionaux de l'insurrection de Boko Haram dans le nord-est du Nigeria*, 9.
[300] Harnischfeger, Johannes. "Boko Haram and its Muslim critics: Observations from Yobe State," 47.
[301] Higazi, Adam. "Mobilisation into and against Boko Haram in North-East Nigeria," 12.
[302] Higazi, Adam. "Mobilisation into and against Boko Haram in North-East Nigeria," 35.

difficult to account for. These include religious zeal, indoctrination convincing that the declared ends justify the violent means, demagoguery and oratory, as well as the quest for purpose and adventure.[303] It is important to note that coercion is another major source of Boko Haram recruits – it now account for more members than recruitment through *da'wa*.[304]

As for the attitude of local population in areas most strongly affected by Boko Haram, the radical oppositional message of the group had, initially, substantial appeal among people who were disillusioned with established Islamic reform movements and their *ʿulamāʾ*, co-opted into the secularized and corrupt networks of the Nigerian state.[305] In this phase, Boko Haram's call for Islamic justice against repression by authorities also raised sympathies, as police forces had a reputation for being inefficient, corrupt, and even abusive and brutal.[306] Furthermore, Boko Haram initially avoided Muslim civilian casualties (e.g. school buildings burnt at night to ensure that pupils were not directly affected) and tried not to antagonise the Muslim community.[307]

With increasing radicalisation and violence following the crisis of 2009, however, Boko Haram quickly lost this appeal. After going underground and losing much of its political patronage, the sect had to seize most of their provision from locals. Boko Haram robberies have severely disrupted the agricultural rural economy of Borno, which has been one of the principal causes they became locally unpopular.[308] The population of the sect's one-time headquarters, Maiduguri, had equally turned hostile against it. In response, Abubakar Shekau ordered that all residents of the city are enemies, and based on the doctrine that those who do not join Boko Haram's cause are not Muslims, should be killed. Since then, there have been several bombings of soft targets, such as markets and bus stations, in Maiduguri.[309] Inhabitants have in many places responded to the Boko Haram threat by forming local vigilant groups.[310]

It is worth noting that there exists an opposing tendency of popular attitude as well, which has developed especially since 2011. Increased military presence in the operational zone of Boko Haram in the aftermath of the 2011 bombings in Abuja has led to heavy civilian casualties and widespread popular opposition to what came to be perceived as "an army of

[303] Higazi, Adam. "Mobilisation into and against Boko Haram in North-East Nigeria," 14.
[304] In the Boko Haram context *da'wa* can be understood as "calling people into their ranks through preaching and persuasion, including material incentives."
Higazi, Adam. "Mobilisation into and against Boko Haram in North-East Nigeria," 12.
[305] Higazi, Adam. "Mobilisation into and against Boko Haram in North-East Nigeria," 21.
[306] Pérouse de Montclos, Marc-Antoine. "Boko Haram and politics: From insurgency to terrorism," 150.
[307] Harnischfeger, Johannes. "Boko Haram and its Muslim critics: Observations from Yobe State," 54.
[308] Higazi, Adam. "Mobilisation into and against Boko Haram in North-East Nigeria," 35-36.
[309] Higazi, Adam. "Mobilisation into and against Boko Haram in North-East Nigeria," 43.
[310] Higazi, Adam. "Mobilisation into and against Boko Haram in North-East Nigeria," 4.

occupation."[311] The brutality of the armed forces has drawn new recruits to Boko Haram and, once again, turned the group in the eyes of some into resistance against abusive authorities.[312]

When discussing popular attitude towards Boko Haram in northern Nigeria, a note on the position and situation of the Christian community is worthwhile, as while they constitute a minority in states where Boko Haram has been most active, they have been gravely affected by its violence.

From a historical perspective, the first encounters between Islam and Christianity in northern Nigeria occurred with the arrival of European missionaries during the British colonial rule (1903-1960).[313] Yet, Nigeria had seen little polarization of its population along religious lines up until the late 1970s debate in the Constituent Assembly on individuals' right to change religion (for more detail see section 3).[314]

According to Islamic political theory, political power in areas inhabited by Muslims should be in the hands of Muslims, although the conversion of every subject is not required.[315] In the context of increased Islamic religious activism from the 1980s onwards, this principle was accentuated by Salafi preachers, suggesting that that "public affairs should be determined by those who were guided by God."[316] In this period, some of the first attacks on churches in northern Nigeria were carried out.[317]

There are no records of attacks on Christians by Boko Haram until the killing of the group's leader, Mohammed Yusuf, in July 2009. Even tough after Shekau's assumption of leadership, churches and the Christian community became one of Boko Haram's targets, the majority of the sect's victims – around two thirds – were Muslims.[318] Boko Haram never actually stated its purpose in targeting Christians but scholars have argued that it is a means to create panic and especially to join international jihadist narrative.[319] These assumptions contradict some of the stereotypes related to Boko Haram frequently appearing in media, such as forced conversion or a Muslim invasion of the South.[320]

[311] Mohammed, Kyari. "The message and methods of Boko Haram," 25.
[312] Higazi, Adam. "Mobilisation into and against Boko Haram in North-East Nigeria," 37.
[313] Higazi, Adam. "Mobilisation into and against Boko Haram in North-East Nigeria," 29.
[314] Adesoji, Abimbola O. "Between Maitatsine and Boko Haram: Islamic Fundamentalism and the Response of the Nigerian State," 100.
[315] El Fasi, M. and Hrbek, I. "Stages in the development of Islam and its dissemination in Africa," 57.
[316] Harnischfeger, Johannes. "Boko Haram and its Muslim critics: Observations from Yobe State," 58.
[317] Higazi, Adam. "Mobilisation into and against Boko Haram in North-East Nigeria," 29.
[318] Pérouse de Montclos, Marc-Antoine, ed. *Boko Haram: Islamism, politics, security and the state in Nigeria*, 5.
[319] Harnischfeger, Johannes. "Boko Haram and its Muslim critics: Observations from Yobe State," 56.
[320] Pérouse de Montclos, Marc-Antoine, ed. *Boko Haram: Islamism, politics, security and the state in Nigeria*, 4.

To sum it all up, Boko Haram should be understood as "another disruptive factor within the *umma*, much more than the trigger of a civil war and a civilizational clash between the so-called 'Muslim North' and 'Christian South.'"[321]

4.5 Final remarks on Boko Haram

This overview of Boko Haram's development has attested that it fits into the picture of turn-of-century tendencies of Islamic radicalisation and internationalisation of jihadist rhetoric. Bok Haram does not, however, form a part of a centrally commanded international terrorist network, nor does it receive substantial foreign funding. Both its membership basis and scope have remained local, or at the most regional. On the ideological level, it has built mostly on the existing local legacy of violent Islamist movements. Boko Haram has undoubtedly adopted some of the narratives of foreign jihadist movements, but its underlying purist ideology in regard to the state, law, and education is of indigenous origin and reacts to local religious, political, and social realities.

Having discussed the recruitment pattern and societal support base of Boko Haram, it has to be stressed that Boko Haram's ambitions of implementing a radical form of *Sharia* do not correspond at all to the demand of a very large majority of Nigerian Muslims. While it is tolerated by some segments of the population who avoid informing security forces against their family members or who see Boko Haram fighters as counterweight against the repressive military, it has no mass support and the means used by the sect are generally disapproved of.[322]

Sufi orders and the Izala continue to be the two dominant contemporary Muslim foci of religious identity in norther Nigeria. 35 % of the *ʿulamāʾ* in northern Nigeria are said to be Izala, 24 % belong to the *Tijāniyya*, less than 8 % to the *Qādiriyya*, and the vast majority of remaining imams have no particular affiliation. These statistics well demonstrate the marginality of imams affiliated with radical sects, such as Boko Haram[323] and by inference also the marginality of those sharing Boko Haram's radical beliefs and ambitions.

[321] Pérouse de Montclos, Marc-Antoine. "Boko Haram and politics: From insurgency to terrorism," 155.
[322] Pérouse de Montclos, Marc-Antoine. "Boko Haram and politics: From insurgency to terrorism," 151-152.
[323] Pérouse de Montclos, Marc-Antoine. "Boko Haram and politics: From insurgency to terrorism," 152.

Conclusion

Following this overview of the manifestations of Islamic religious extremism in northern Nigeria in the last 200 years it can be concluded that they do show a certain degree of continuity in their ideology, motivation, and ambitions, as well as display a gradual and interactive evolution of methods and narrative.

The analysed movements also share a number of recurrent patterns which have been determining for their ideology and rhetoric. Among these are the constant references made to the Shehu and the Fulani jihad. Subsequent Islamist movements have, regardless of their position on Sufism, portrayed Usman dan Fodio as a role model for religious reformers.[324] In line with changing their circumstances and needs, however, various movements referred to different parts of the Shehu's legacy, showcasing the extreme flexibility of religious argumentation.

All the addressed movements have to some extent drawn their inspiration from foreign radical Islamist currents and scholars. Usman dan Fodio owes the origin of many of his tenets to al-Maghīlī, an acclaimed religious scholar of North African descent; the Izala and other Salafi movements were inspired by Saudi *Wahhabi* scholars; the Shiites of Ibrahim El-Zakzaky were influenced by Egyptian thinkers and the Iranian Revolution; Maitatsine's preaching was reminiscent of *Mahdist* and messianic movements believing in the arrival of a new prophet; and Boko Haram has tried to mimic international jihadist organisations. However, while Nigerian radical groups often imitated the language and oratory of foreign religious movements and scholars, their incentives have been mainly local.

The single most unequivocal pattern shared by all of the analysed groups has been their quest for a pure version of Islam. This ambition was of course never isolated in the private religious or theological realm but had always significant social, ethnic and political resonance. The call for religious purity and return to the practice of the pious ancestors has been present in Islam virtually from its beginnings and has been linked to the perception of the Prophet Muhammad's early community as the culmination of Islamic civilisation. The ideals of purification and return to the pious beginnings are also among the basic tenets of Salafism. I argue, however, that the reason why this idea of purification appeared and fell on fertile ground in northern Nigeria in the first place, and why it assumed prime importance among the motives of all religious movements, may be attributable to the local context of indigenous African

[324] Harnischfeger, Johannes. "Boko Haram and its Muslim critics: Observations from Yobe State," 51.

religions and African Islam.[325] Generations of religious reformers up until our days have responded to the reality of widely prevalent syncretic beliefs and unorthodox Sufi practices influenced by indigenous rituals by trying to impose a pure version of Islam.

The ambition of reformist movements did not by far consist only of purifying the Islamic religion. The envisioned purification of the perceivedly corrupt society that surrounded them has been an equally important motive behind the preaching and actions of all the addressed radical Islamist movements. Their notion of a pure society has, however, been changing over time and even more importantly they have seen diverse groups as the main obstacle of such society. From the overview provided in this thesis, an interesting conclusion can be drawn. Namely, that in the eyes of all radical reformist movements the perceived source of the corruptedness of society has been the ruling elite of the day. The Shehu fought his jihad against the ruling Hausa kings and *malams* under their patronage, who upheld syncretic beliefs. Izala stood up against Sufi brotherhoods interrelated with the colonial administration and traditional elites, who were engaged in unorthodox practices. Maitatsine contested Western influence and attacked elites enjoying the technological achievements of Western modernity, which were deemed un-Islamic. Finally, the Shiites, as well as Boko Haram, contested the Westernised secular government and its un-Islamic laws, and instigated against Izala, which was co-opted by the governing elite. It is also important to note that purification attempts have always been directed at the *umma*, not against Christians or unbelievers.

By remodelling themselves continuously, radical reformist movements have reacted to changing local grievances from the side of altering authorities. While religious conviction has enjoyed primacy among the factors leading to the radicalisation of Islamist groups, socio-economic and ethnic factors cannot be undervalued either. The significance of poverty and economic dislocation in radicalisation can be partially implied from the fact that in Senegal, where there was no oil boom which would have disrupted the traditional economic balance.[326] Ethnicity seems to be of particular importance when it comes to mobilisation into radical Islamist movements. While there have been no apparent ethnic consideration in the emergence of recurrent religious uprisings in northern Nigeria, ethnicity does come forth in the recruitment pattern of each radical group, and most religious crises do have ethnic backlash. Further factors making northern Nigeria prone to religious radicalisation are widespread illiteracy,

[325] This term is used among others in the publication *African Islam and Islam in Afrcia* by Eva Evers Rosander (1997) to distinguish orthodox Sunni Islam from the Islam practiced mainly by Sufi brotherhoods in Africa, referred to as African Islam.
Evers Rosander, Eva. "Introduction: The Islamization of 'tradition' and 'modernity'," 1.
[326] For more detail see: Back, Irit. "From the Colony to the Post-Colony: Sufis and Wahhâbîsts in Senegal and Nigeria."

unemployment, and disillusionment among youth, and the tradition of political exploitation of religious conflicts. To sum up, it always needs to be remembered that social and economic dislocation, ethnic skirmishes, political power struggle, and psycho-social reasons are ever present behind and are incorporated in the religious rhetoric.

Religious movements have periodically tried to reform and purify society according to their own conception. Their reform efforts have been based on the assumption that the only remedy for religious deviation, economic and social deprivation, and the corruptedness of society is the introduction of genuine *Sharia* which would bring about social justice. From the recurrence of such purifying and reform attempts it can be deduced that the same problems which served as motives for the actions of past radical reformist movements have continued to persist until our days. Given the perseverance of the preconditions and motivations for radical Islamist uprisings, religious crises are likely to erupt in the future as well.

The Nigerian state has so far proved unable to find an effective response to radical Islamist violence in the north. Deployments of security sources have tackled only the manifestation of the violent ideology that underpins religious uprisings, while they have left the root causes leading to the upsurge of radical Islamist ideologies unaddressed. Ideology can thus sprout another manifestations in the future, possibly with even more violent orientation.[327]

Clearly, a more sustainable approach is needed to deal with the ideology nourishing radical Islamist movements, and especially with "the formative environment that enables such ideology to flourish."[328] Robust religious, political, and economic reforms are inevitable in this endeavour. Religious leaders and Islamic scholars holding moderate views should unite in their criticism of extremist ideologies and terrorist methods. School curricula and religious sermons should be monitored by such authorities, in order to diminish the possibility of spreading radical beliefs in the public domain. On the political level, government representatives should strive to find the golden mean between excessive repression of Islamist movements on the one hand, and their negligence and exploitation for political ends on the other. It is also crucial that state authorities improve their legitimacy, transparency, and regain the trust and support of local people. Economic reforms should focus on poverty reduction, employment creation for youth, and the elimination of social destitution, which have been exploited by extremist ideologues in their mobilisation and radicalisation efforts in northern Nigeria.

[327] Omouha, Freedom. "Boko Haram and the evolving Salafi Jihadist threat in Nigeria," 186.
[328] Omouha, Freedom. "Boko Haram and the evolving Salafi Jihadist threat in Nigeria," 186.

To conclude, to defeat the ideology behind the radical Islamist menace, religious leaders, political and other secular elites, as well as ordinary Muslim citizens need to unite and make a concerted effort to develop a non-violent response to modernity.

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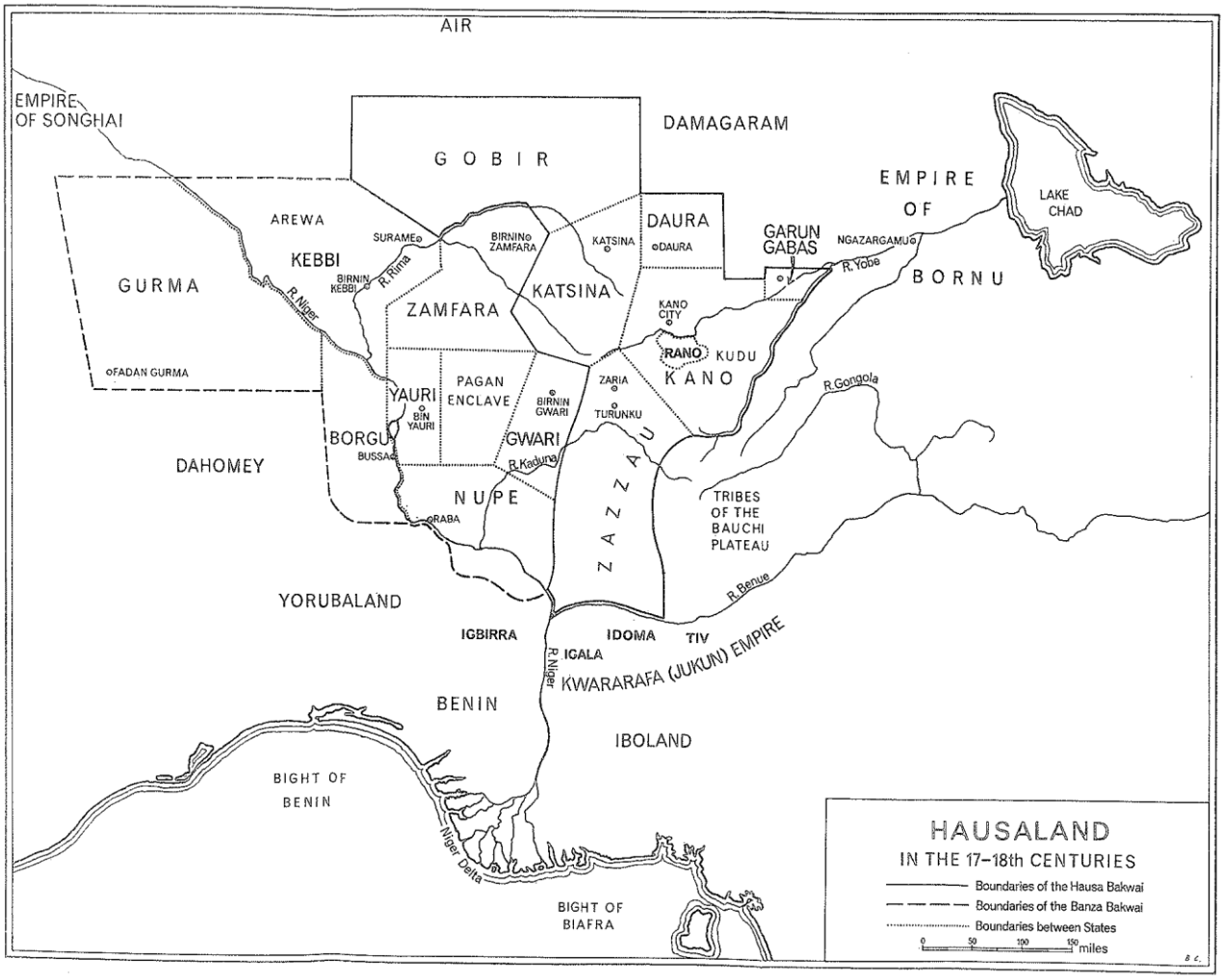
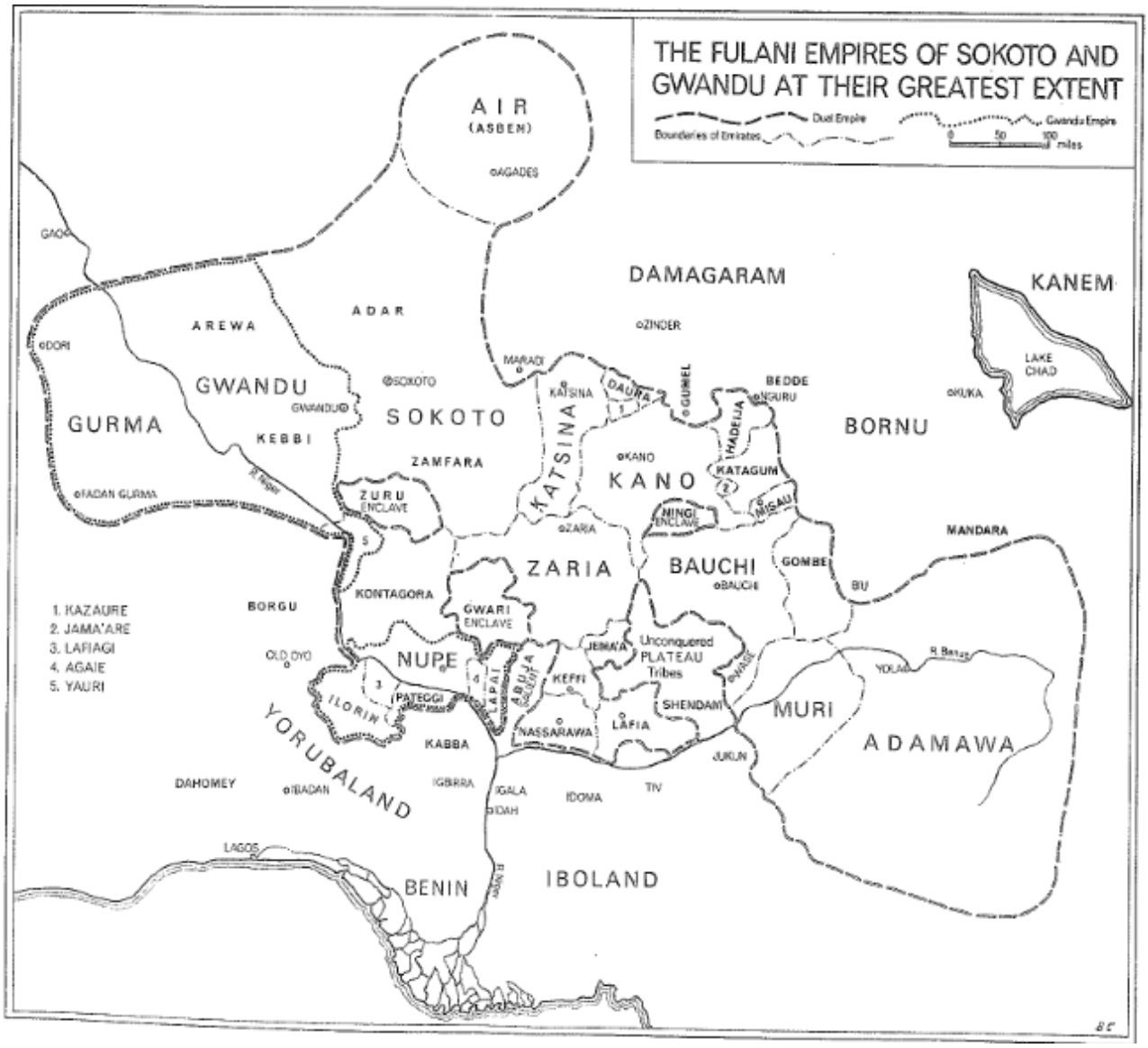
Appendix

MAP 1: Hausaland in the 17-18th centuries



Source: Johnston, H. A. S. *The Fulani Empire of Sokoto.* London: Oxford University Press, 1967.

MAP 2: The Fulani empires of Sokoto and Gwandu at their greatest extent



Source: Johnston, H. A. S. *The Fulani Empire of Sokoto.* London: Oxford University Press, 1967.

MAP 3: States affected by Islamist terrorist groups

Source: "A clueless government." *The Economist*. 10 May 2014. [16.08.2015]. Available from: http://www.economist.com/news/middle-east-and-africa/21601839-incompetence-nigerias-president-and-government-hurting-countrys.